

## Government to let Murdoch bid for 'Times' go ahead

Mr Rupert Murdoch was given clearance yesterday to start securing union acceptance of his terms for taking over "The Times", "The Sunday Times" and the three supplements. MPs were told the Government had agreed to the transfer of the titles to News International without reference to the monopolies commission.

## Minister lays down eight conditions

By Hugh Noyes  
Parliamentary Correspondent  
Westminster

The Government has agreed to the transfer of Rupert Murdoch's News International without referring the merger to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. But in clearing Mr Murdoch to embark on securing within three weeks the agreement of the trade unions to his terms for taking over "The Times", "The Sunday Times" and the three supplements, Mr John Biffen, Secretary of State for Trade, has laid down eight stringent conditions.

Opening the emergency debate in the Commons yesterday on the question of referring the proposed purchase to the Monopolies Commission, Mr Biffen told the House that the conditions relating to editorial independence would be incorporated into the Articles of Association of the Times Newspapers companies and any change in the relevant articles would in future require his consent.

That requirement would be backed up by the sanctions provided in the Fair Trading Act, 1973. In certain circumstances a breach of some of the conditions would be a criminal offence, liable on conviction, to imprisonment or to a fine or to both.

The three-hour debate ended with the Commons approving the Government's decision by 281 votes to 239, a majority of 42 for allowing the transfer to go ahead.

Five Conservative backbenchers defied the Government three-line whip, and voted with Labour. They were Mr Jonathan Aitken (Thames, East); Mr Peter Bottomley (Greenwich, Woolwich, West); Sir Hugh Fraser (Stafford and Stone); Mr Barry Forster (Birmingham and Edgbury, Port); and Mr Delwyn Williams (Montgomery). More than 100 MPs did not vote.

The conditions laid down by the government are:

1. The newspapers are to be published as separate entities.
2. Future disposals are to be subject to the consent of a majority of the independent national directors of Times Newspapers Holdings Ltd.
3. The number of the independent directors is to be increased from four to six and the appointment of any independent director in the future is not to be made without the approval of the existing independent national directors.
4. Editors shall not be appointed nor dismissed without the approval of the majority of the independent national directors.
5. The editor of each newspaper shall retain control over any political comment published in his newspaper and, in particular, shall not be subject to any restraint or inhibition in expressing opinion or in reporting news that might directly or indirectly conflict with the opinions or interests of any of the newspaper's proprietors.
6. Instructions to journalists shall be given only by the editor or those to whom he has delegated authority.
7. Subject to any annual budget for editorial space and expenditure, the editor shall retain control over the appointment, disposition and dismissal of journalists on his newspaper and of all other content of his newspaper.
8. Disputes between the editors and the directors of the companies are to be settled by the independent national directors.

## Trident force unlikely to get fifth submarine

By Peter Hennessy

A fifth submarine for the Trident strategic nuclear force has become a hidden casualty of pressure on the defence budget.

Though no public announcement will be made before 1983, it has become clear in Whitehall that the "fifth boat option", as it is called, is dead in all but name.

The extra cost it would incur, between £675m and £750m on top of the £4,500m to £5,000m earmarked for the procurement of a four-boat Trident submarine squadron, means that nothing short of an unexpectedly vigorous upturn in the economy would enable the Government to go ahead and build it.

The United States Government will not need to be told formally for another two years that the Thatcher administration has dropped its option on a fifth boat and will not therefore be requiring the additional missiles, launchers, navigation and fire control systems that would have been provided by American manufacturers.

Abandonment of a fifth vessel for the Trident force, which is intended to replace the Polaris submarine squadron in the early 1990s and to carry the British nuclear deterrent into the 2020s, will have both political and strategic consequences.

The fifth boat lobby has been quite strong inside the defence community, though it now seems resigned to losing.



Divers' cheer: Mr James Tucker, aged 27, from Port Elizabeth, South Africa, and Mr Philip Robinson, aged 31, from Bradford, the two divers rescued from the North Sea last week, celebrating yesterday in Aberdeen after spending several days in a decompression chamber. They described their 10-hour battle against the cold when they were trapped more than 400ft beneath

the sea, after the lifeline on their diving bell snapped. Their rescue last Wednesday was the first time divers had been transferred from one bell to another under water—a so-called "wet transfer". At a showing of a film of the rescue yesterday it was said the technology which had made the manoeuvre successful was probably available only in the North Sea.

## 500 feared lost from Java Sea ferry boat

Jakarta, Jan 27.—More than 500 men, women and children were missing tonight after a blazing Indonesian passenger ferry sank in a storm in the Java Sea hundreds of miles from land.

A Government spokesman said that more than 500 people who were on board the Tampomas II, 6,139 tons, had been rescued in the area which is 500 miles north east of Jakarta.

Officials expressed grave concern for the lives of the missing people because at least 13 rescue ships had searched all night for survivors.

The inter-island ferry, blazing since early yesterday, went down by the stern at 12.45 pm. A search and rescue campaign was launched immediately.

Mr J. E. Habibie, spokesman for the Sea Communications Ministry, said on national television that rescue ships had picked up 525 passengers, 29

crew and 12 bodies, but about 570 passengers and crew were missing.

He said he was not sure whether those rescued included 149 people who jumped into the sea soon after the blaze broke out. They were picked up by another Indonesian ferry, the Sangihe, but the rest of the passengers stayed on board.

When the Tampomas II left Jakarta for Ujung Pandang in south Sulawesi it was carrying 1,054 passengers, 82 crew and dozens of vehicles.

Mr Habibie said that at first it had appeared that the flames were being brought under control, but the Sangihe suddenly reported that the fire had blazed up again and the Tampomas II began listing badly to port.

About 40 minutes later it started sinking with hundreds of men, women, and children jumping for their lives into the rough sea.—Reuters



## Strike wave gathers momentum in Poland

Warsaw, Jan 27.—Industrial workers, coal miners, farmers, and students staged strikes and protests in Poland today and threatened further action as pressure mounted on the authorities for a new initiative to break the social unrest.

The demands made by the strikers went far beyond the issue of free Saturdays.

Workers in Bielsko Biala began an indefinite general strike demanding the dismissal of local government officials.

All main plants were closed, including a Fiat car factory employing 11,000 men.

In Lodz, workers halted production for three hours and transport was stopped for one hour as part of a nationwide campaign to force the authorities to keep the promises made to strikers last summer.

At least 100,000 workers in Katowice and coal miners in the Bytom region also struck for four hours. Work stopped in more than 70 mines and enterprises in Bytom.

In Rzeszow, headquarters of a campaign for the legalization of Rural Solidarity, Mr Lech Walesa, the Solidarity trade union leader, conferred with farmers about coordinated strike action.

Fifteen farmers in Swidnica, south-west Poland, began a hunger strike in a church today to press demands for the registration of Rural Solidarity.—Reuters

## One person in 10 without work as jobless total jumps by 103,000

By David Blake  
Economics Editor

The underlying level of unemployment went up by 103,000 in January to reach 2,236,000 (9.5 per cent of the workforce).

Sharp rises in the number of people seasonally out of work and the number of school leavers without a job led earlier predictions by Mr James Prior, Secretary of State for Employment, that the month would see an "appalling" increase come true.

One person in 10 in the labour force is now out of a job, and total unemployment rose by 175,222 to 2,411,452.

These figures, released as the British Government's annual survey of the labour market, showed that the number of people out of work rose by 103,000 in January.

Mr Prior blamed the Government and Mrs Thatcher for the "catastrophic" rise in the number of people out of work, saying that the Government had "blamed the world economy" for the figures and produced a "series of protest marches" instead of taking action.

The number of people out of work rose by 103,000 in January, but the number of people in work rose by 103,000 in the same month.

But the Government may be able to take some comfort from the fact that the rate of unemployment has now stopped accelerating.

Although there were five weeks between the latest count and the one taken in December, the 103,000 increase in the seasonally adjusted figure for adult employment was almost

the same as in the previous four-week period.

In addition, the number of vacancies at employment offices went up slightly for a second month to 183,000. Traditionally this is the best indicator of the way the labour market is moving, but the figures are so low as to present a gloomy picture.

Whitehall officials are thus carefully refraining from saying that the growth in the number of people out of work is past the "critical" stage.

Economic activity started to pick up towards the end of last year, but the hope that it would be enough to bring the unemployment rate down has not been fulfilled.

The figures would be much worse, but for Government subsidies, which provide training at employment subsidies. A total of £25,000 are covered by such schemes, most of them being paid for short-term working. The Government estimates that without these subsidies, total unemployment would be £20,000.

Mr Len Murray, general secretary of the TUC, described the figures as "another wretched record".

Mr David Reagen, of the General and Municipal Workers, said that the "hopeless" and "despair" was being spread by the Government's monetarist policies.

Sir Terence Beckett, director general of the CBI, said that things would get worse before there is any hope of reversing the trend. It was imperative to reduce competitiveness by minimizing cost increases, he said.

## £1 and 20p coins to be introduced by 1983

By David Nicholson-Lord

Inflation and convenience bit a little deeper into British tradition yesterday when the announcement that the £1 note, after a distinguished but increasingly scruffy career, is to be killed off and replaced by a coin.

The change is due to begin in 1983, a year after the introduction of a new seven-sided 20 pence piece to bridge the 1 pence and 50 pence coins. The £1 coin and note will then run in parallel for several years until the note is phased out.

But in a gesture to monetary traditionalism, the £1 coin will resemble a gold sovereign. It will be the same size as a sovereign, slightly smaller than the present 5 pence piece, and

made of a bright yellow alloy, like the old threepenny-bit.

The announcement, made in a Commons written answer by Sir Geoffrey Howe, Chancellor of the Exchequer, was immediately welcomed by Mr Derrick Skinner, director of the Automatic Vending Association of Britain, representing about 200 companies.

Mr Skinner said it would be particularly useful for cigarette, food and ticket machines, though less so in garages, because of the escalating price of fuel.

The design of the £1 coin has not been decided, although it will have a "distinctive security edge" to prevent counterfeiting. The 20 pence silver coin will

have the same diameter of seven-eighths of an inch, but it will be much thinner than the £1 note.

Inflation, coupled with the speed of vending machines and automation, is the main reason for the change. The pound is now worth 30 pence compared with its 1971 value, with the result that notes are handled more often and with less respect.

Their life expectancy, measurable in years when they were introduced just before the First World War, has thus dropped to about nine months.

In contrast, only 270 million £1 coins are expected to be minted initially. Each should last 40 years and contribute a

long-term public expenditure saving.

Numismatists greeted the announcement as a major step forward, saying that it had been a long time since £1 had been struck in anything other than gold.

That was in 1817 when Charles I lost the Royal Mint in August, 1649, and was forced into borrowing from supporters of silver-plans for melting.

Meanwhile, the Bank of England emphasized that the £1 note, except for a brief appearance in the Napoleonic wars, has only been a permanent feature since the panic run on gold in August, 1914, and the drying up of the supply of sovereigns.

## Blunt Reagan warning to kidnappers

Kidnappers of American diplomats in future can expect swift retribution from the United States, President Reagan said when welcoming the returned hostages at the White House. There are limits to America's patience, he declared. An estimated quarter of a million people lined the streets cheering the convoy of buses. Earlier, in their first public appearance at a West Point press conference, some seemed anxious to play down reports of ill-treatment at the hands of their captors.

## Day strike threat by civil servants

A national one-day strike by 500,000 civil servants is being planned for March 6 by union leaders intent on breaking through the Cabinet's 6 per cent public service wage rise limit. Other industrial action to disrupt key government business is likely to follow.

## Onshore oil search

One of eight licences for onshore oil and gas exploration granted by Mr David Howell, the Secretary of State for Energy, is for an area in Fife which includes the Royal and Ancient golf course at St Andrews. Other licences include areas adjoining the north Yorkshire coast.

## Prison action grows

Prison officers at Ashford Remand Centre and at Gloucester have resumed industrial action over the meals break dispute as a result of the High Court ruling that the leaders of the Prison Officers Association had acted unlawfully in instructing members to suspend industrial action.



Afghan moves: Mr Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, at the Islamic conference in Taif, Saudi Arabia, where rumours circulated that he might visit Moscow for talks on Afghanistan. Mr Kurt Waldheim, the United Nations Secretary-General, was being pressed not to appoint an Afghanisthan mediator.

## Doctors pay move

Incentive payments to doctors and nurses in inner-city areas with poor medical services have been proposed by the British Medical Association in a move to halt the falling quality of care.

## Protests expected at college proposal

Local authorities are expected to make strong protests over government plans to remove polytechnics and higher education colleges from their control, but many will be obliged to have a heavy financial burden lifted. The proposals involve the establishment of a new national body responsible for allocating government funds.

Rates rise: A GLC rate increase of 37.6 per cent means that inner London rate rises will range from 20 up to 70 per cent.

Madrid: East and West fail to find neutral ground on disarmament.

Havana: Cuba is preparing its people to defend the revolution against a Reagan assault.

Classified advertisements: Appointments, pages 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

Leader page 15  
Letters: criminal attempts, from Professor J. A. Andrews and others; nationally, from Mr Ian Martin and Mr D. H. Poulton.

Leading article: Unemployment: West German Government: One point cuts features, pages 9, 10.

Bernard Levin at the Royal Academy: Ian Murray on Algeria's new outlook: Marcel Bezzina on the danger of trial on TV: Alan Hamilton's London Diary: October, page 16.

Miss Constance Applebee, Mr Jack Knights: Alex, page 11.

Shirley Morley interviews Judy Campbell, who opens for the Young Vic: Paganini's triumph: A. L. Rowse reviews The First of the Moors: The Sports, page 12.

Football: West Ham lose two-goal lead in League Cup: Cheltenham Town draw 1-1 with Reading: Southampton draw 1-1 with Ipswich: Southampton draw 1-1 with Ipswich.

Business News, pages 17-22: Stock market: The market maintained its recent rally spurred on by hopes of a fall in interest rates and still returned to favour with rise of £1.74. FT index closed 5.5 higher at 4674.

## Michael Schenbry is incurable

Michael Schenbry is incurable. He worked hard, loved walking and running, music and travel. That he contracted multiple sclerosis—and came to us.

We have over 270 severely disabled and incurable patients to care for. We cannot cure them. But we can help them. Skilled care has helped Michael learn to live with his illness. It's a bit of a hindrance, he says. "But I know I had to come to terms with it."

We, too, need help. We are not part of the Health Service and we rely a lot on the generosity of the compassionate people who help us with a donation, a deed of covenant or a bequest.

THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES (Funded by Parliament)  
Dept. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

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Director of Appeal and Publicity: Air Commodore D. E. Dixon, OBE, DFC, AFC.

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HOME NEWS

# Leaders of 500,000 civil servants plan national strike in March to break Cabinet's 6% pay rise limit

By Paul Routledge  
Labour Editor

A national one-day strike by 500,000 civil servants is being planned for March 6 by union leaders intent on breaking through the Cabinet's 6 per cent public service wage rise limit. Other industrial action designed to disrupt key Government business is likely to follow.

The civil service unions' pay campaign committee met yesterday to draw up contingency strike plans that will be implemented if ministers refuse to concede a joint wage claim of between 15 and 20 per cent.

The first propaganda drive in the forthcoming pay battle will be fired today when 750 delegates of the 105,000-member Society of Civil and Public Servants (SCPS) meet in the Queen Elizabeth Hall on the South Bank, London, to agree a response to the Government's "punitive cash limit". They are certain to adopt proposals for industrial action backed by a 22 a week voluntary levy payable from next week's earnings. A similar conference is being

held tomorrow by the Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA), which with 225,000 members is the largest union in the civil service. The CPSA is expected to take the first steps towards joining the industrial action, and further backing is expected from the Inland Revenue Staff Federation and the Institution of Professional Civil Servants.

March 6 is the favourite date for a pre-Budget strike among union leaders charged with drawing up a campaign of disruption: it will come at the end of a month's bargaining timetable on the first joint claim submitted by all the unions.

SCPS delegates will today endorse a 19 per cent claim, based on the gap between salaries for administrators and executives in the civil service and similar jobs in the private sector. That figure, the union claims, would have been announced by the Pay Research Unit which looks each year at the comparative movement in earnings with industry. This

year, its findings have been set aside by the Government.

Mr Campbell Christie, deputy general secretary of the SCPS, said last night: "All the indications are that there will be support for action if the Government sticks to 6 or 7 per cent for the civil service."

The unions are due to agree on a joint pay claim on February 5, and they have set a three-week limit for negotiations. If a satisfactory pay settlement is not reached by April 1 has not been agreed by February 26, the signal will be given to go ahead with industrial action.

This bad news for the Government on the pay front coincided with agreement being reached on 71 per cent rises for the largest single group of public service workers. Union leaders of about one million local government workers signed a deal yesterday giving a flat rate increase of £4.60 a week and an extra day's holiday. Average earnings will rise from £32 to £39 a week.

## Fog defeats Army's anti-tank missile

From Henry Stanhope  
Defence Correspondent  
Middle Wallop, Hampshire

The Army's latest anti-tank missile was defeated by its worst enemy yesterday — the European weather. But officers defended its ability to penetrate Russian armour, if not the swirling fog which forced the cancellation of its first public demonstration on Salisbury Plain.

The Ministry of Defence is fitting the missile, best known by its acronym TOW, to about 80 Lynx helicopters in the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR) to upgrade BAOR's defences against Soviet tanks, which outnumber those of NATO in central Europe by almost three to one.

Yesterday's press demonstration was to have marked the end of what the Army has described as highly successful acceptance trials which have been conducted during the past three months by the Army Air Corps from its headquarters at Middle Wallop. Training courses for helicopter crews are about to begin and the first Lynx/TOW flight will be carried out by the 1st Air Corps, towards the end of next month.

At £2,500 a shot, the Army claims that TOW is actually cheaper than the obsolescent SS11 missile which it is replacing. It is also faster, more accurate and has a greater range of up to nearly two and a half miles, and is simpler to fire.



A TOW missile being loaded on to a Lynx helicopter yesterday by the Army Air Corps.

Developed by the American Hughes Aircraft Company it is already in service with 25 other countries, including 10 in NATO and was extensively used by United States forces in Vietnam.

Its effectiveness has been open to serious doubt since Britain decided to buy it in 1977 instead of its main competitor, the more expensive Franco-German HOT missile.

Work has now started in the United States on a new warhead because trials indicated that the existing one could not

penetrate the frontal armour on the latest Soviet tanks.

Meanwhile the existing model was defended yesterday by Major General Bill Witherall, Director of the Army Air Corps. "There are certain problems with the frontal armour of the T-72," he admitted. "But there are more ways than one of slanting a cat. It is very effective when you approach the tank from a side-on ambush position as we intend to do. And if you hit him on the front it would make him spill his vodka, all right." He said that

the Air Corps had been very encouraged by the high hit rate during trials.

Yesterday's cancellation might also be seized upon by those who remain sceptical about the future for anti-tank helicopters.

Major Neal Boldwick who was to have flown the Lynx for four firings against cardboard targets, said: "We have to abide by peace-time safety levels now. But in wartime we would have carried out our mission for or not, because we would have little option."

## Ferries stay in port as talks fail

By Donald Macintyre  
Labour Reporter

Pay talks between union officials and Townsend Thoresen, which had been in progress since last week at Southampton by the seamen's dispute, broke down last night.

There had been hopes that the two ferries, the Viking Venture and the Viking Valiant, would resume their cross-Channel service after talks began on a company offer adding 10 per cent to earnings.

The offer was made independently of the national employers' body, the General Council of British Shipping, but with its approval. It would have lifted earnings of deckhands to £170 a week and of engine room men and other crew to £154.

After last night's breakdown, which came when the company refused to move towards the National Union of Seamen's demand for overtime to be paid at time-and-a-half rates, the company issued a warning that it would continue withholding pay from the crews.

Townsend Thoresen had offered to release 11 deckhands deemed to have refused to obey a master's order to sail last week, and to begin paying again the remaining 250 crew on both vessels provided an agreement could be reached.

The union said last night the company's action amounted to a full lock-out. Union negotiators had in the talks at Southampton offered to resume the

Southampton service even without a pay agreement, the union said.

The company said, however, that it was not prepared to resume paying the crew since it would remain subject to continuing guerrilla action decided by the NUS unless a local agreement was reached.

The union's disputes committee yesterday decided not to grant dispensation for vessels on banana trade routes to and from the Windward Islands in the West Indies, despite appeals from the governments of St Lucia and St Vincent.

Crews aboard the Gest Land and Gest Tide at Barry, South Wales, were said by the union yesterday to have voted against resuming work.

## Biffen consent to transfer of papers

The following is the text of a statement by Mr John Biffen, Secretary of State for Trade, on the proposed purchase of The Times, The Sunday Times and three supplements by Mr Rupert Murdoch.

Consent in a case of urgency to transfers of newspapers not economic as going concerns and intended to continue as separate newspapers.

Whereas:

1. News International Ltd (NIL) is a newspaper proprietor whose newspapers have an average circulation per day of publication, calculated in accordance with section 57(3) of the Fair Trading Act 1973, amounting with that of The Times to 500,000 or more copies, and also amounting, with that of The Sunday Times, to 500,000 or more copies;

2. The Times and The Sunday Times are newspapers of which The Thomson Organisation Limited is a newspaper proprietor;

3. The Secretary of State received on 23 January 1981, an application for his consent to the transfer of each of The Times and The Sunday Times to NIL without requiring a report from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission under section 59 of that Act but subject to the following conditions:

(a) The Editor of The Sunday Times and the Editor of The Times ("the Editors") shall not

be appointed or dismissed without the approval of the Secretary of State;

(b) The Editor of each newspaper shall not be subject to any political control published in his newspaper, and, in particular, shall not be subject to any restraint or restriction in exercising his editorial freedom in reporting news that might directly or indirectly conflict with the opinions or interests of any of the newspapers or in publishing advertisements and where in his newspaper, advertisements, in general are, or any advertisement in particular is, or is likely to be, published;

(c) Any dispute between the Editors, or either of them, and the Directors of NIL is to be referred to the independent national directors of NIL or such one or more of the independent national directors as they may determine; and their decision shall be final and binding.

The Articles of Association of NIL and NIL are to be amended to comply with the foregoing requirements shall not thereafter be altered or amended in any way which may affect the operation of the said requirements except with the written consent of the Secretary of State.

John Biffen  
Secretary of State for Trade  
27 January, 1981.

be appointed or dismissed without the approval of the Secretary of State;

(b) The Editor of each newspaper shall not be subject to any political control published in his newspaper, and, in particular, shall not be subject to any restraint or restriction in exercising his editorial freedom in reporting news that might directly or indirectly conflict with the opinions or interests of any of the newspapers or in publishing advertisements and where in his newspaper, advertisements, in general are, or any advertisement in particular is, or is likely to be, published;

(c) Any dispute between the Editors, or either of them, and the Directors of NIL is to be referred to the independent national directors of NIL or such one or more of the independent national directors as they may determine; and their decision shall be final and binding.

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John Biffen  
Secretary of State for Trade  
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## Dissenting MPs have to explain

By Robin Young  
and John Witherow

Several Labour MPs who have announced their support for the Council for Social Democracy will be called to account by their constituency parties next week. There have been calls for the resignations of Mr Tom Ellis (Wrexham), Mr John Gorton (Gateshead, West), and Mr Neil Kenyon (Hillingdon, Hayes and Harlington).

Dr David Owen is to attend a regular meeting of his Plymouth, Devonport constituency executive on Friday and Mr Witherow is expected to be in high regard. He has already written to all our delegates explaining his position.

The Leicester, East constituency party has planned no

special meetings over Mr Tom Bradley's decision to join the Labour Party and stand as a social democrat. It is felt he would stand a good chance of being re-elected.

Mr Robert MacLennan (Caithness and Sutherland) will have to face a special general management committee meeting on Saturday when opposition to his stand is likely.

Mr MacLennan, who has been MP for the vast constituency since 1966, has considerable support among the Labour voters.

Events last weekend threw into sharp focus the curious relationship between the trade unions and the Labour Party. The move to the left at all levels of the party hierarchy and the influence the unions have exerted left many traditional Labour supporters bewildered, to say the least.

Nowhere has the change been more apparent than in the Yorkshire region, and nowhere have allegiances changed more rapidly than in the Barnsley constituency of Mr Roy Mason, Labour MP for the past 28 years.

## Union move to left in Barnsley worries many

From Ronald Kershaw  
Barnsley

The traditionally moderate influence of miners' leaders in the election of Mr Arthur Scargill, president of the Yorkshire NUM.

Party rules permit NU branches to send delegates to constituency management committees to represent their branch members in their local constituencies.

Cheques were sent from Barnsley area NUM headquarters to constituencies in which miners live, enabling them to represent on a management committee.

At Barnsley, miners' delegates appeared in such numbers that they were able to vote for left-wing nominees in the constituency party.

It was then a simple step for Mr Scargill and his Yorkshire miners' council to instruct their sponsored MPs to vote in accordance with area council policy, on pain of unsympathetic treatment at the next parliamentary candidates' meeting.

This week's move by the shop workers has focused attention on the NUM's Barnsley headquarters branch, which employs fewer than 50 people but which sends the maximum six delegates to the constituency party general management committee.

It is said, but not confirmed, that the fees paid by the branch represent several hundred off-innations. One delegate is allowed for every 50 members or part thereof. It is generally believed that the branch has been created with membership of hundreds of retired miners in the Barnsley constituency.

It is understood, but not confirmed, that caucus representatives from constituencies over the county are shortly to meet to discuss strategy with the NUM's executive committee. The NUM has been an NUM-sponsored MP since the by-election of 1953.

## Fresh disputes procedure is put to unions

By Our Labour Editor

Leaders of printing trade unions involved in negotiations over Mr Rupert Murdoch's proposed purchase of Times Newspapers Limited are to have talks next week on a new dispute procedure aimed at curtailing unofficial stoppages.

Proposals for a disciplinary clause have been outlined in a letter to the unions inviting them to a meeting to discuss the issue on Monday. Initial reaction from the main craft union, the National Graphical Association (NGA), is encouraging.

Mr Leslie Dixon, president of the NGA, said yesterday: "We will discuss it with them, no problem. I think we ought to have a dispute procedure covering all sections of the industry including all Fleet Street, not just The Times."

The procedure suggested to the printing trade unions at Times Newspapers is understood to lay down that workers taking unofficial industrial action would lose a day's pay on the first night. If the stoppage continued on the second night members of the same union would be suspended on basic rates. On a third night, all printing workers would be suspended on basic rates.

Talks with the NGA yesterday concentrated on staffing levels in the composing room where the union has 350 members. Mr Murdoch wants an early changeover to electronic photocomposition, which would involve about 45 per cent voluntary redundancies.

Other discussions were held with the Society of Graphical and Allied Trades. There will be talks today with the National Society of Operative Printers, Graphical and Media Personnel.

## New conditions over 'Times' sale directly enforceable

By Fred Emery  
Political Editor

Sir Denis Hamilton, chairman and editor-in-chief of Times Newspapers Holdings Ltd, said last night the conditions that Mr Rupert Murdoch had accepted were stronger than his previous undertakings, and for the first time, were directly enforceable.

Such enforcement would not necessarily have been recommended by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. No conditions had been imposed in the case of the Thomson acquisition in 1967.

Mr Harold Evans, editor of The Sunday Times said: "I would have preferred our independent Sunday Times consortium, but no editor or journalist could ask for wider guarantees of editorial independence than those Mr Murdoch has accepted, now entrenched by the Secretary of State."

The criminal law sanctions for breaking the conditions are laid down in section 62 of the Fair Trading Act, 1973, and, upon conviction on indictment, are imprisonment for up to two years or a fine, or both.

However, as Mr John Biffen, the Secretary of State for Trade, mentioned in the debate, only two of the conditions will be subject to criminal law, together with the requirement that the company's articles of association not be changed without written consent of the Secretary of State.

The legal instrument binding Mr Murdoch, according to the Department of Trade, is to be the statement of consent to the purchase by Mr Biffen, which he issued yesterday. It will be the subject of an exchange of letters between Mr Biffen and Mr Murdoch.

The first two conditions subject to the criminal law are a

requirement that The Times and Sunday Times shall be published as separate newspapers, and that Mr Murdoch's News International Ltd shall not, without the consent of a majority of the six independent national directors do anything which might result in the control of the newspapers.

Cabinet ministers, in advising Mr Biffen, were clearly influenced by the risk of seeing the newspapers' future jeopardized had a reference to the commission delayed by a purchaser.

Some details of the Government's final hectic decision-making emerged last night. Mr Biffen disclosed that his department reserved the formal application for a reference to the commission until Friday, the day he returned from a visit to India. However, his department had been apprised of the likelihood of Mr Murdoch's bid being accepted before he left, and official legal studies were begun.

Mr Biffen did not tackle the issue apparently, until some time on Monday morning. There followed a series of consultations, in which the idea of imposing ministerial conditions as a short cut past the monopolies commission was mooted.

After a ministerial meeting on Monday, with Mrs Thatcher in the chair, lawyers from both sides were called in the evening to the Department of Trade to try incorporating the editorial safeguards. Journalists' ideas were also submitted but in the end not incorporated.

What remained were the safeguards put forward by the Thomson consortium, less the concept of editorial quality which, apparently, proved impossible to express as a legal commitment.

## Skinhead revenge raid led to race riot, jury told

A race riot broke out in Woolwich, London when armed skinheads, chanting "Sieg Heil", mounted a revenge raid on coloured people, a jury at the Central Criminal Court was told yesterday.

Between 30 and 100 white youths, some of them with their heads shorn almost bald, attacked about 100 to 150 coloured people in a cinema queue, Miss Ann Currow, for the prosecution, said. When the coloured people took refuge in the Odeon cinema, the skinhead leader 2800 of glass in the building.

She added that a solid phalanx of youths, shouting: "We are going to kill the coons", engulfed everything in sight.

Cars were damaged and Mr Ashok Lekhe, a Pakistani was waiting at a bus stop, was

attacked by 12 youths. He was kicked unconscious and his teeth were kicked out and three more were loosened. He needed 14 stitches in a gash on his forehead.

On trial are Vincent Wadson, aged 18, a labourer, of Tewson Road, Woolwich; Kevin Wakeling, aged 18, labourer, of Appley Road, Canning Town; and a 19-year-old, of Tare Road, Canning Town.

Martin White, aged 20, a labourer, of John Wilson Street, Woolwich, and Kevin Heathfield, aged 20, a labourer, of Woolwich.

All deny riotous assembling together and unlawfully fighting and making an affray on March 28 last year. Mr Wakeling also denies having an offensive weapon, an iron bar, on the same day.

The trial continues today.

## Many dams in dangerous state, magazine says

Too many of Britain's dams and reservoirs are falling into a dangerous state of disrepair, according to a report in New Civil Engineer, the magazine of the Institute of Civil Engineers.

The report described a "disturbing chapter of ignorance and neglect by owners—particularly private owners who control the oldest dams."

It said the danger was getting worse as dams continued to age and owners became more reluctant to spend money on maintenance.

The report said the 1975 Reservoirs Act was supposed to improve matters but the Department of the Environment had

refused to implement it on grounds of cost.

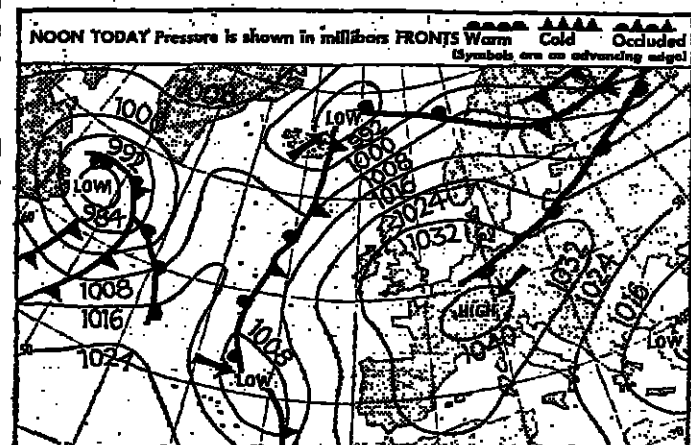
The Act should be implemented immediately, the report added. The magazine said that safety was governed by the Reservoirs Act, 1975, which merely required all dams to be inspected every 10 years by an engineer.

That was not being done in many cases.

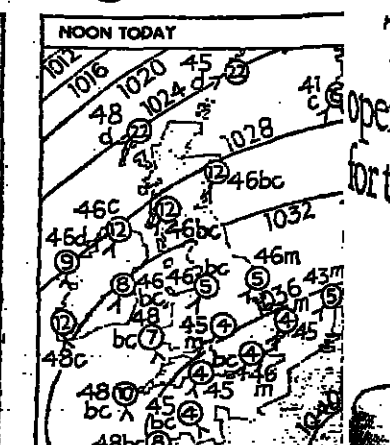
The report added that "amazingly, no one even knows where all Britain's dams are."

It continued: "It is nothing short of a public scandal that Parliament's wishes on a matter affecting public safety should have been flouted for so long by petty disagreements, prevarication and parsimony."

## Weather forecast and recordings



Today  
Sun rises: 7.45 am. Moon sets: 4.43 pm.  
Moon rises: 12.40 am. Moon sets: 11.20 am.  
Last quarter: 12.40 am.  
Lighting up: 5.13 pm to 7.14 am.  
High water: London Bridge, 6.48 am. 6m: 7.23 pm. Am. Avonmouth, 11.57 am. 10.30m: Dover, 4.03 am. 5.8m: 4.37 pm. 5.3m: Hull, 11.26 am. 6m: 11.44 pm. 6.1m: Liverpool, 4.18 am. 7.4m: 4.34 pm. 7.4m.  
Lfr=0.3048m. In=3.2808ft.  
Pressure will remain high over the British Isles.  
Forecast for 6 am to midnight: London, SE, Central S, E, central N. England, East, Angles, Midlands: Fog, patches, dense in places, early and late, some bright or sunny intervals; wind mainly S light; max temp 7°C (45°F) but 10°C (50°F) in summer parts.



Channel Islands, SW, NW England, Wales, Lake District, Isle of Man, SW Scotland, Glasgow, N Ireland: Mainly dry, sunny intervals; wind S to SW, light or moderate; max temp 10° to 12°C (50° to 54°F).

NE England, Borders, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, central Highlands, Moray Firth, NE Scotland: Mist or fog patches early and late, sunny periods developing; wind SW, moderate; max temp 9° to 11°C (48° to 52°F).

Argyll, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: Mostly cloudy with outbreaks of drizzle, some sunny intervals; wind SW, fresh or strong; max temp 9°C (48°F).

Outlook for tomorrow and Friday: Mainly dry but foggy at times in England and Wales; some moderate rain in Scotland and N Ireland.

See passages: S North Sea, Straits of Dover, English Channel (E): Wind SW, light or fair; 10°C (50°F) in summer parts.

Yesterday  
London: Temp: max 6 am 6 pm, 13°C (55°F), min 6 pm 9 pm, 9°C. Humidity: 6 pm, 82 per cent. Rain, 24 hr 6 pm, 4.6 mm. Sun, 24 hr 6 pm 0 hr, 1 hr. Bar, mean sea level, 6 pm 103.5 mm Hg. Wind, 24 hr 6 pm 1000 millibars = 29.53 in.

Overseas selling prices									
Australia	52	Austria	34	Bahamas	20	Bahamas	20	Bahamas	20
Canada	100	Canada	100	Canada	100	Canada	100	Canada	100
France	100	France	100	France	100	France	100	France	100
Germany	100	Germany	100	Germany	100	Germany	100	Germany	100
Italy	100	Italy	100	Italy	100	Italy	100	Italy	100
Japan	100	Japan	100	Japan	100	Japan	100	Japan	100
Netherlands	100	Netherlands	100	Netherlands	100	Netherlands	100	Netherlands	100
Spain	100	Spain	100	Spain	100	Spain	100	Spain	100
Sweden	100	Sweden	100	Sweden	100	Sweden	100	Sweden	100
Switzerland	100	Switzerland	100	Switzerland	100	Switzerland	100	Switzerland	100
USA	100	USA	100	USA	100	USA	100	USA	100
West Germany	100	West Germany	100	West Germany	100	West Germany	100	West Germany	100
Yugoslavia	100	Yugoslavia	100	Yugoslavia	100	Yugoslavia	100	Yugoslavia	100



# Let's assume you don't wish to look like everyone else.

It's nothing unusual these days to be asked to pay £11,000 for a new motor car.

But apparently it's asking a lot more if, in so doing, you wish to separate yourself from the great mass of 2.8 litre look-alikes which inhabit the company car park.

## Identity crisis averted.

Glance again at our saloon. The Royale could hardly be described as look-alike, neither does it ask you to pay any more, nor are there masses of them.

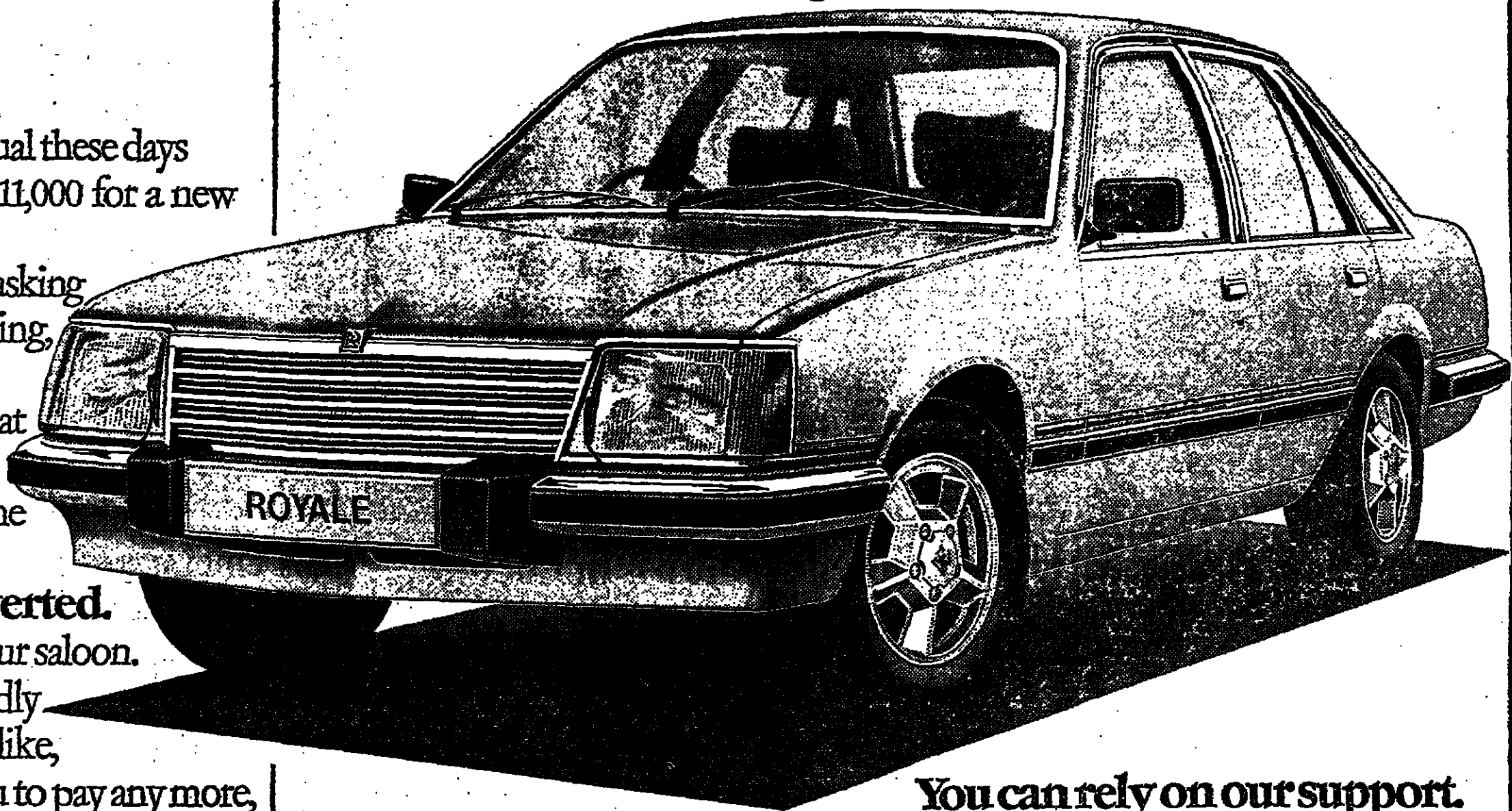
The engine delivers all you might expect from 6 cylinders. We'll just mention a top speed of 115 mph.\*

And because the engine develops maximum torque at only 3400 rpm, you never get the feeling it's overstretching itself, no matter how much of a hurry you're in.

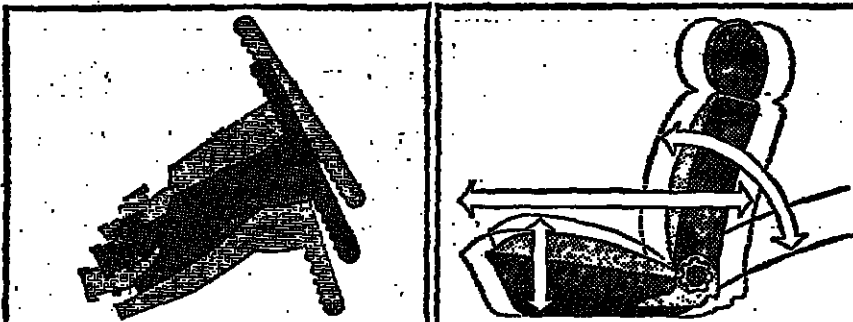
## You'll feel good inside.

The interior appointments could well be termed 'by appointment'. The doors lock centrally, the sun roof is steel and the radio/stereo cassette player has not two speakers but three.

The tinted windows are electrically operated as is the release for the saloon boot.



Each seat offers the comforts of crushed velour plus its own fully adjustable head restraint.



## All directors were not created equal.

Perhaps most important, the driver's seat adjusts for height as well as for reach and rake, and the steering wheel is tiltable. A couple of minor corrections could make you not only a more comfortable driver, but a much safer driver.

## You can rely on our support.

You can see that the Royale has a beautifully aerodynamic shape.

What you can't see is the brilliantly engineered suspension that supports it and you to create a ride of quite joyful smoothness.

Also what the eagle-eyed amongst you won't have failed to notice is that the Coupé in our picture sports a '3 litre petrol injection' badge. (So does the Saloon, they're our latest additions. Royale 3 litre Saloon: £12,046. Royale 3 litre Coupé: £12,633)\*

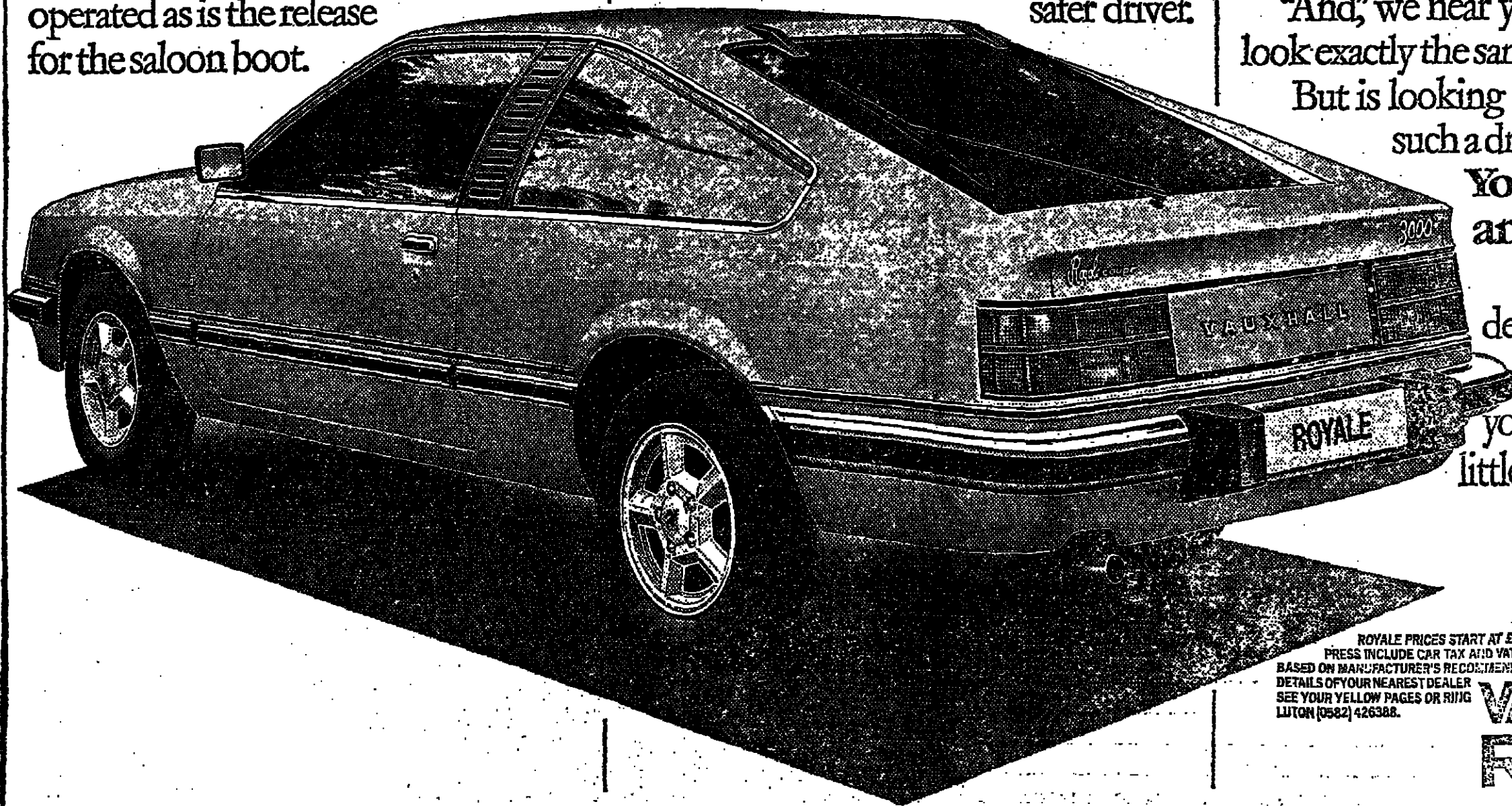
Naturally, overall performance is an improvement on our 2.8 litre models.

"And," we hear you say, "2.8 and 3.0 look exactly the same."

But is looking like another Royale such a dreadful burden?

## Your driving ambition realised.

See your Vauxhall dealer. Once you've tried the Royale, you'll realise there's very little further you can go.



ROYALE PRICES START AT £11,012. ALL PRICES CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS INCLUDE CAR TAX AND VAT BUT NOT DELIVERY OR NUMBER-PLATES, AND ARE BASED ON MANUFACTURER'S RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICES. SOURCE: MANUFACTURER. FOR DETAILS OF YOUR NEAREST DEALER SEE YOUR YELLOW PAGES OR RING LUTON (0582) 426388.

**VAUXHALL**  
**ROYALE**



## HOME NEWS

## Action resumed by prison officers after court ruling

By Peter Evans  
Home Affairs Correspondent

Prison officers at Ashford Remand Centre have resumed industrial action after a High Court judge ruled that the national executive of their association, because of the court decision, was not to return to normal working.

Mr Justice Brown-Wilkinson ruled on Friday that the national executive of the Prison Officers' Association had acted unlawfully in instructing members to suspend industrial action.

He ordered the union leaders to reinstate the action, but suspended the order for six weeks so that the special conference which had called for the action could be reconvened.

It is understood that the association sent out a circular yesterday saying that a delegate conference would be held soon but did not give a date or venue. The circular is thought to have recommended that the suspension of industrial action should be continued pending further information from the national executive. Eleven branches are still engaged in some form of action over the dispute, which was about payment for meal breaks.

The Home Office has refused

to go to arbitration over the claim for payments for meal breaks taken during extra duties. Instead Mr William Whitelaw, the Home Secretary, sees a new duty system as the solution to the dispute.

Mr Whitelaw acted yesterday to cur the prison population by about three hundred, by laying before Parliament an order allowing remission for good behaviour to anyone sentenced for more than five days and up to one month. The present qualifying period of more than one month is arbitrary.

He thinks it is right in principle to apply remission to as many prisoners as possible. The benefit will be felt most at crowded local establishments where short-term prisoners are normally held. The order will come into effect on February 23.

Prison population figures given yesterday showed an increase again after a big fall during the dispute. The January 19 total was 40,278, including those held in emergency accommodation. That had increased to 41,277 yesterday.

But in spite of the confusion following the court case people are still being moved from emergency accommodation to prison.

## Association loses role as provider for homeless

By Our Social Services Correspondent

The Housing Corporation announced yesterday that it is ending the role of the Family Housing Association as a provider of accommodation for the homeless and is making it solely responsible for paying off an accumulated deficit of £925,000.

The decision will mean that about 100 properties which could have provided 200 homes will be sold, about ten staff will be made redundant immediately, and the association will become a housing maintenance and management body.

The decision also means that the main recommendation of a special manager, appointed at the corporation's insistence last September, has been rejected.

The special manager recommended that the association should be allowed to continue with a smaller development programme, producing 90 units a year compared with the average of 400 to 500 a year until 1978.

Although the special manager's report did not allocate blame for the association's

financial difficulties, it did point out that the Department of the Environment had powers to waive the repayment of grants when properties were sold. That hint has not been taken up by the corporation's board.

The association's financial difficulties stem from a moratorium imposed in 1978 on its building programme by the corporation and the Department of the Environment, when the association was faced with legal action because a proposal to buy an hotel fell through. The association was the case on appeal, but the moratorium continued for nine months, and a second one was imposed when the association, said yesterday that she was disappointed that no responsibility had been accepted by the corporation or the department for the deficit, which she estimated at £850,000. The association would fight for its share of any deficit, financing likely to be paid to other associations who were likely to have similar difficulties because of the Government's housing cuts.

The decision had ended the "cat and mouse" game played for the last three years, and meant the association could plan its future, even though it would be restricted.

## Windmill as high as Big Ben for Orkney

By Nicholas Hirst

A windmill, which with its blades vertical will be almost as high as the clock tower of Big Ben, is planned to generate electricity in Orkney in 1983 or 1984.

The £5.6m project is the most ambitious renewable energy scheme yet to be given official support. All but £1m of the cost of the "aerogenerator" will be met by the Department of Energy, with the rest being provided by the North of Scotland Hydro Electric Board.

If successful, the project could go a long way to supplying electricity to the outlying Scottish islands, which, at the moment, are largely supplied by expensive diesel-driven generators.

The hydro board tried last year to impose a fuel surcharge on the islands but was forced to withdraw it in the face of angry protests. As a result, a loss of about £8m is expected on providing electricity to Orkney-Shetland and the Western Isles this year.

Working at its full capacity of three megawatts, the aerogenerator will provide sufficient energy for 1,000 of the 8,000 domestic consumers, which will be fed into the island's grid.

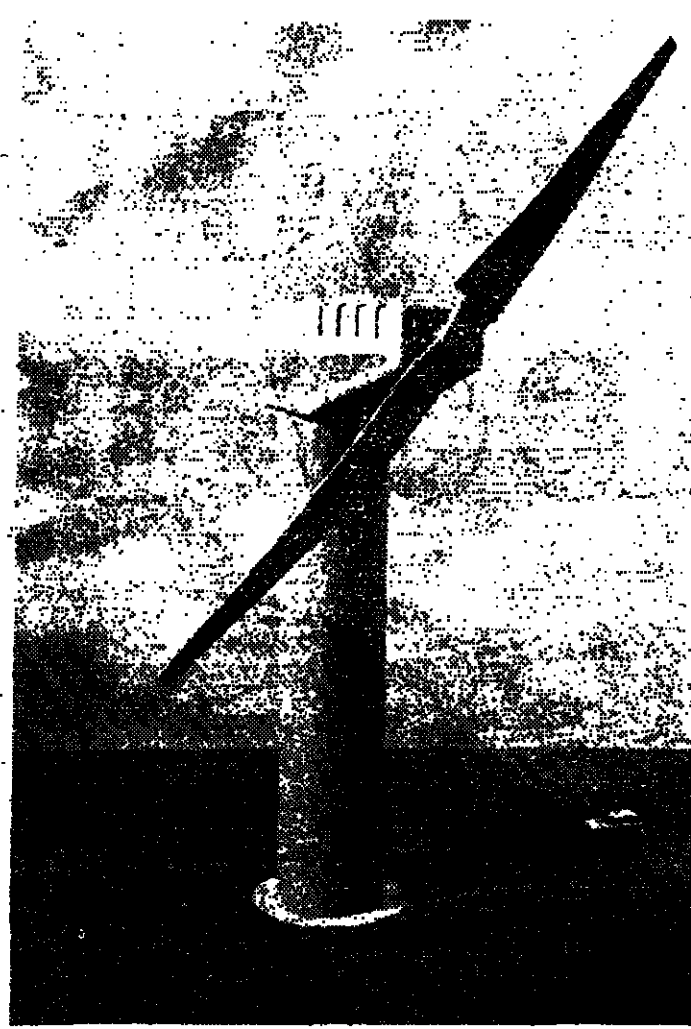
Planning consents for the project are required from the Secretary of State for Scotland and Orkney District Council before site work, expected to start in the spring of 1983, can begin, but no difficulties are expected.

A site has been chosen at Bargar Hill, two miles from the coast, to take best advantage of sea winds. It is remote from habitation.

A smaller machine with a 250 kilowatt capacity is planned to begin operation in October this year to provide experience for the running of the larger generator. Site work for the smaller machine, a twelfth the size of the commercial aerogenerator, is to begin in August.

The big machine needs winds of between 16 and 60 mph to function. Those speeds are common in Orkney.

The hydro board has been experimenting with wind power since the 1950s and started operating a 22 kilowatt generator on South Ronaldsay to serve a farm in December. That is 40ft high with 15ft blades.



A model of the 198ft windmill planned for Orkney.

## GLC to increase next year's rate by 17.6%

By Christopher Warman  
Local Government Correspondent

The Greater London Council is to increase its rate for the coming year by 17.6 per cent, a rise of 3.7p on the present rate of 21.7p, and well above the Government's guidelines on inflation.

Together with the likely increase in the Inner London Education Authority rate precept of 46 per cent, the loss by London authorities of government grant and the expressed intentions of some Labour councils not to reduce their services, this latest indication from the GLC means that rate increases in the London area will be very high, ranging from 20 to 70 per cent.

Richard Brew, deputy leader of the GLC, announcing the proposed increase yesterday, said that the budget was being increased by only 7 per cent, "significantly lower than the current rate of inflation."

The Government allowed in the rate support grant for the year beginning in April an inflation of 6 per cent for pay and 11 per cent for prices, which together make about 7 per cent.

The GLC has been unable to confine its increase to that figure, however, because some of the council's expenditure last year was met from accumulated balances which are not available this year, and the remaining 2 per cent is caused by the loss of rate support grant.

The increase is considerably larger than the Conservative administration wanted, particularly as the GLC election takes place in May. Mr Brew emphasized that over the four years of its control, the council's

average annual rate rise had been kept to a single figure. We are continuing our policy of taking note of the council's need to reduce public expenditure. Bearing in mind the extremely difficult financial times for local government and its ratepayers, we have made every attempt to keep the rate increase to an absolute minimum," he stated.

London has suffered a loss of government grant, which has been transferred to areas outside the main conurbations. The GLC has been particularly badly affected as well by the 18.8 per cent pay settlement for firemen, because that is a level well above the normal and one-third of the council's staff are firemen.

The announcement of a high GLC precept to go with the 46 per cent ILEA increase means that it will be almost impossible for rate increases in inner London to be lower than 20 per cent. Even Kensington and Chelsea, which aims to follow government guidelines, has given a warning of a big increase. The borough has lost government grant, and Mr Nigel Freeman, leader, predicts in the latest newsletter that the increase will be "very substantial indeed."

In the Labour-controlled boroughs of Lambeth and Camden, where increases will be in the order of 50 per cent or more, ratepayers' groups are gathering strength. In Lambeth supplementary rate bills have been burnt at protest meetings, and in Camden a new group has been launched with the intention of taking legal action against the council and encouraging people to withhold part of the rate bills.

## IBA chief urges restraint on horror film advertising

By Kenneth Gosling

Commercial for horror films has caused the Independent Broadcasting Authority a few difficulties recently. Lord Thomson of Monifieth, chairman of the IBA, said yesterday.

Speaking at a conference on radio advertising control in London, Lord Thomson said there were a lot of people who enjoyed horror films and the IBA would not wish to stop them being advertised. However, there were many viewers and listeners who did not like them and had no wish to see them.

"Because commercials come up unannounced, random and often repetitive within IBA rules, and by reason of the very power which makes them valu-

able to the advertiser, the commercials should be produced with due regard to the sensitivities of the vast majority of ordinary viewers."

Lord Thomson said there were those who tried to beat the system; the authority would have no hesitation in rejecting commercial ideas and proposals that tried to mislead or that included "distasteful material likely to offend."

Recently, the IBA has received a number of complaints about the advertising of horror films on radio and television, and it has placed a timing restriction on some so that they can "only be shown or heard during the late evening."

## Man cut racehorse's tail and mane 'for revenge'

From Our Correspondent

Douan O'Sullivan, aged 20, a labourer, was given a suspended jail sentence and fined £30 at Clonmel District Court, Co. Tipperary, yesterday when he pleaded guilty to cutting the tail and mane of the racehorse Storm Bird, the favourite for the Two Thousand Guineas and the Epsom Derby. The animal was not injured.

The incident occurred at the temporary stables of Vincent O'Brien, a leading trainer, last week.

Mr O'Sullivan said he had attacked the horse because he had a hatred and a grudge against the trainer. Describing

Storm Bird as the best horse in Europe, he said he had wanted to injure it but to use it as a way of getting revenge on Mr O'Brien.

Mr O'Sullivan said he was not satisfied with the trainer's treatment of his mother, brother and himself since his father, who had worked with Mr O'Brien all his life, died.

Witnesses told the court that there was no physical injury to the animal. The tail was a foot shorter than it should be and the mane was docked.

Mr O'Sullivan apologized and the magistrate said that because of his good character reference he would give him a two-month suspended sentence.

## Government to back £55m Laker purchase

By Arthur Reed

Although a consortium of British and foreign banks is providing £55m for Sir Freddie Laker, chairman of Laker Airways, to buy three European A300 airbuses, the deal is being backed by the British Government, a parliamentary answer disclosed yesterday.

British Airways, which is a 20 per cent partner in the consortium developing the A300 and the smaller A310, has undertaken to provide interest rate support to the banks financing the Laker deal and will in turn be reimbursed by the Government.

That backing will enable Laker Airways to pay for the duration of the loan a fixed interest rate broadly equivalent to that which would have been paid for competitive airliners from the United States, where the interest rate would have been supported by the United States Government.

The Department of Industry said last night: "The extent of the British taxpayer's commitment will depend on the movement of the interest rate over the whole period of the deal."

The action was being taken under the terms of the Civil Aviation Act, 1949.

Similar interest support arrangements were announced in the Commons in April last year for the purchase by British Caledonian Airways, another independent airline, based at Gatwick airport, of six A310s.

Such arrangements are agreed between the partner governments within the Airbus consortium, led by France and West Germany, and are designed to fend off the competition from the aerospace industry in the United States.

## "Sus" Bill to be examined by MPs' committee

By Our Political Correspondent

For the first time a House of Commons committee charged with the duty of examining the detail of a government Bill will hear evidence from outside witnesses at three sessions before the Bill proceeds with the normal committee stage.

The committee set up to examine the Criminal Attempts Bill, which deals with revision of the "sus" laws, will hear evidence from a government minister, a High Court judge and others on the proposals in the Bill.

Three sessions on February 3, 4 and 5 will be devoted to hearing evidence, the witnesses being subject to questions.

Sir Graham Page, Conservative MP for Crosby, a solicitor and a former minister for local government, is chairman of the committee. The minister invited to give evidence is Mr Patrick Mayhew, QC, Minister of State at the Home Office.

Mr Wedgwood Benn yesterday called on the Labour movement to play a leading part in the campaign to achieve homosexual equality.

Speaking at a meeting in the House of Commons to launch a new booklet from the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCLC), he said that the Labour Party's National Executive Committee would soon be issuing a comprehensive policy document on homosexual rights.

Mr Benn, Labour MP for Bristol, South-East, who wrote the foreword to the booklet, *Gay Workers: Trade Unions and the Law*, said that homosexual people, like blacks and women, were particularly vulnerable to discrimination. "People who have 'come out' in the last

## Sex bias in tax plans is criticized

Removal of sex discrimination from the income tax system could be deferred indefinitely, if proposals contained in the Government's recent consultative document on the taxation of husband and wife are accepted, Lady Lockwood, the chairman of the Equal Opportunities Commission, said yesterday.

She complained that the document failed to explain clearly why the system needed reform, and that it did not adequately set out or examine the various options for change.

The present system discriminated between men and women on grounds of sex and marital status and was based on an outdated view of the role of women, Lady Lockwood said.

The Government's preferred proposal, which involves giving married couples the option of being taxed independently but does not do away with the principle of aggregating husband's and wife's incomes, did not overcome the fundamentally objectionable features of the present system.

The Equal Opportunities Commission believed that the individual should be the basic unit for tax purposes. The consultative document's treatment of that issue was inadequate and often arbitrary, Lady Lockwood said.

She was speaking at a conference sponsored by the Institute for Fiscal Studies.

Mr Nicholas Morris, of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, another speaker at the conference, presented calculations to show that abolition of the married man's allowance, so that each earner receives a single person's allowance, would raise £2,600m in extra revenue. That would enable child benefit to be raised to £8.50 a week from its present £4.75.

In brief

Boxer's brother fined £1,400

Michael Martin Conch, aged 22, brother of John Conch, the boxer, was fined £1,400 and ordered to pay £4,000 compensation at Marlborough Street magistrates' court London yesterday after admitting stealing a cheque card belonging to V. Genovese and using the same man's American Express card to obtain £1,404 of jewelry by deception in January last year. He lives at Elm Park Road, Chelsea.

His flatmate, Timothy Hawkins, aged 25, a hairdresser, admitted offences of deception and was fined £220 and ordered to pay £240 compensation to National Westminster Bank.

Parcel collection halted by strike

No parcels will be collected until further notice in Greater Manchester because of an unofficial strike by 1,300 postal workers, the Post Office said yesterday. Letters and packets are not affected by the strike.

Yachtswoman cleared

Mrs Rosie Swale, yachtswoman and author, was cleared yesterday of a charge in a London court that she was researching a novel based on prostitution and needed to interview men for background material.

Union decision

The Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers' executive yesterday decided to appeal against the High Court decision that allowed Mr Jack McPherson Quinn, a Lambeth council labour Party conference as a member of the union's delegation.

Club can stay open

Kensington and Chelsea Council has failed in its attempt to close The Garden, a night club that opened in January, 1979, without planning permission. Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for the Environment, overruled the council after a public inquiry.

No action on steel leak

The Director of Public Prosecutions has decided that no further action should be taken over confidential papers that were alleged to have been taken from the British Steel Corporation at Workington.

Boy on harm charge

A boy aged 13 was remanded on bail until February 26 at Bracknell Juvenile Court, Berkshire, yesterday accused of grievous bodily harm after an incident on Monday in which a teacher was stabbed in her classroom.

Bridge fall girl saved

A girl aged 13 who fell on to the parapet of a footbridge over a railway line at Vauxhall Hill, Greenwich, London, yesterday, was pulled to safety by Police Constable John Brown.

Canal rescue by PC

Police Constable David Lawrence rescued a man from the South Yorkshire Canal in Rotherham yesterday by jumping into the water and holding the man up until help arrived.

Girl is awarded £240,000 after hospital blunder

Tracy Clark, aged 16, who is paralysed by spinal injuries, won a £240,000 damages award in the High Court, London, yesterday. She is the victim of a hospital blunder four years ago and is confined to a wheelchair.

Miss Clark, of Cowper Avenue, Tilbury, Essex, was awarded the damages after a judgment by Mr Justice Goff, who admitted liability for her injuries.

She had a spinal operation at Basildon Hospital in January, 1977. "Afterwards she was not properly or effectively immobilized and she sat up in bed," said Mr Michael Morland QC, her counsel. "This caused damage to the spinal cord and as a result she is paraplegic from the lower chest down."

The agreed damages include compensation for pain, suffering and loss of companionship of people of her own age. Mr Morland said. The award would also allow her to buy a car and a suitable bungalow and would provide future nursing care.

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## HOME NEWS

## Legal action sought in Rampton man's case

By Lucy Hodges

Mr Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for Social Services, has been asked to take legal action against a local authority which is refusing to accept a patient from Rampton special hospital who is ready for release to a hostel.

MIND, the mental health charity, has written to the minister urging him to use his legal powers to force Kent County Council to accept a man who had been waiting three years to leave the high security hospital in Nottinghamshire.

There is complete agreement among the man's doctors and social workers, the mental health review tribunal and successive Home Secretaries that the patient should not be in any hospital, Mr Larry Gostin, legal director of MIND, says.

Mr Jenkin's attention is drawn to the report by the Boynton committee into the management of Rampton, published last November, which referred to the "scandal" of patients fit for transfer who could not leave the hospital. MIND considers the council is breaking the law because it says it has a statutory duty to provide accommodation for such people. The council strongly denies that and says Islington Borough Council, where the man came from, has legal obligations towards him. Islington has agreed to pay for the man, who wishes to remain anonymous, to be housed in Kent because he wishes to be there, near a relation. Kent County Council said yesterday that it had tried to help the man, but had been unable to do so because three local psychiatric hospitals refused to take him and it had been decided he should not go to a hostel in Ashford.

The council said it was agreed that the man might be transferred to a hostel rather than a hospital, where he would receive the necessary support. Part of the reason for him being rejected for the hostel was that the staff there had considerable management difficulties with another former special hospital patient.

MIND replied that the council was evading responsibility. "The patient has pursued every available lawful procedure that any human being has and has been declared fit for release," Mr Gostin said. "Yet he is still in a maximum security hospital."

The difficulty patients have in being transferred from special hospitals to places in the community is well known and widespread, and the Government is increasingly realising that something should be done about it.

## Thames TV fails to get ban on film lifted

Thames Television failed in the Court of Appeal yesterday in its attempt to have lifted an injunction banning it from screening a documentary film about Primodos, the pregnancy testing drug at the centre of pending damages claims.

By a majority, Lord Denning, Master of the Rolls, dissenting, the court dismissed Thames TV's appeal from the ban granted last August on screening the film *The Primodos Affair*. The injunction was in favour of Schering Chemicals Ltd, the British subsidiary of a West German company.

It is contesting two damages claims by parents who say their children were born with malformations as a result of their mothers taking Primodos, which was withdrawn in 1978.

Schering was awarded two-thirds of the costs.

Law Report, page 9

## Government proposal for taking colleges from council control likely to receive mixed response

By Diana Geddes

Education Correspondent

Some local authorities will protest noisily over government plans to remove polytechnics and higher education colleges from local authority control, but many will be secretly relieved to have the financial burden lifted, and most will come to accept with resignation the radical change.

That is the view of most local authority leaders and education officials consulted on the plans.

The Department of Education and Science has drawn up outline proposals approved by Mr Rhodes Boyson, the minister with responsibility for higher education, which are circulating in Whitehall as an internal consultative document.

The proposals involve a new semi-independent, national body along the lines of the University Grants Committee, which would be responsible for allocating government funds to polytechnics and other maintained colleges with large proportions of higher education students.

At present, all maintained institutions of higher education are financed and managed by local authorities. The polytechnics have long pressed for their removal from local authority control.

The Government hopes to have a public consultative document ready by early summer before a White Paper, which would be followed almost certainly by the legislation necessary to set up the new body.

It is likely that the new body would not have direct representation of particular interest groups, but rather it would be made up of eminent people drawn from higher education, industry and local government, but appointed in a personal capacity.

Polytechnics are certain not to have fulfilled their other wish for complete autonomy: their degree courses will still have to be approved by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA), but they are likely to be given greater control over budgets, subject to any guidance or directions given by the new national body.

The Government would like the new body to have some say over higher education courses in the maintained sector, but how that would be achieved remains to be answered.

Mr Boyson is known to want some regional dimension in

the planning of maintained higher education, but again the details are still to be worked out. It is possible that the existing regional advisory councils could be used for that purpose.

Another unanswered question is: Which colleges should be included under the new national body and which left to local authority control? There are about 100 polytechnics and colleges with 60 per cent or more of their work in higher education. Should they all be included?

Mrs Angela Rumbold, Conservative leader of Kingston Council and the chairman of the Council of Local Education Authorities last year, has described the plans as "a grab for power by central government". She warned heads of maintained colleges at a conference last week that the scheme could force the closure of some colleges and create big changes in others.

That kind of public outcry is expected. In private, some even agree that it would be better for higher education to be nationally administered. The Labour-controlled metropolitan authorities with polytechnics in their area are expected to protest loudly.

High praise for students and staff at the Open University came from Mr Mark Carlisle, Secretary of State for Education and Science, yesterday, but he ruled out any chance in the immediate future of introducing mandatory grants for the students.

Mr Carlisle said at an Open University press conference in London that 45,000 students have graduated from that university since it began in 1971. One in 16 of all new graduates in Britain come from that

university. Some people looked down on the university's degrees, but they were misguided, he said. For as well as saying as much about a person's academic status as any other degree, it said a great deal more about his character, initiative and perseverance, qualities that employers would do well to bear in mind.

Mr Carlisle said that his secretary was an Open University graduate, so he had some idea of the effort it took to complete such a degree. Most students had to overcome the

pressures and practical difficulties involved in "distance" learning while at the same time holding down full-time jobs or looking after their homes.

On the Government's decision to increase the university's undergraduate course fees next year by nearly half to £98, Mr Carlisle said that at a time when other sectors of education had to make savings, the students should be asked to make an increased contribution towards the cost.

The Government grant to the university this year was £45m and the taxpayer subsidised 90

per cent of the cost of a student's course. The fee increase would make that about 87 per cent.

A survey published yesterday shows that an increasing proportion of new Open University graduates had less than normal university entrance requirements when they started their degrees: this applied to a quarter of this year's graduates, and 4 per cent had started with no formal examination qualifications at all.

Of the students who started in 1971, 52 per cent have completed their degrees.

## BBC and Equity agree on pay

By Kenneth Gosling

The BBC yesterday gave a guarantee to maintain employment levels for 1981-82 when agreement was reached with Equity, the actors' union, on new pay rates for television appearances.

The union accepted the BBC's fourth offer, a 10 per cent increase in the overall artists' budget from February 7 to December 31, with a new agreement from January 1, 1982.

The 15 per cent increase was previously to have run until February 1, 1982. The employment guarantee was regarded

as of great importance by Equity.

The BBC reiterated its intention to narrow the gap in artists' fees paid by it and the independent television companies.

The gap was greater than it would like, it said. Mr Alasdair Milne, the managing director of BBC Television, said that the agreement would be sought to pay for the £1.3m the agreement would cost. The increase averages 12.8 per cent over the year.

Mr Peter Plowley, general secretary of Equity, said: "We

are extremely hopeful that this represents a very real change in the pattern of negotiations over recent years.

"We think the BBC are now convinced, for the first time and at a higher level, that they have neglected the place of the performer in their overall operation."

When the full award is implemented, the basic weekly fee will rise from £125 to £141. Independent television's basic figure is £125.

The BBC had formerly said that any increase over 10 per cent would mean automatic loss of employment. Yesterday's agreement cancels that.

## MP says jobless men were told to advertise

By Pat Healy

Social Services Correspondent

A Labour MP is protesting that pressure is being put on unemployed family men to advertise themselves as available for work as a condition of keeping their right to supplementary benefits.

Mr Frank Field, MP for Birkenhead, discloses today that three constituents were interviewed in a locked room, and told they would lose their benefits unless they agreed to pay to advertise their availability.

Mr Field has written to Mr Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for Social Services, pointing out that his intervention has restored the men's benefit, and asking how he can rebut the charge that the Government's anti-fraud drive is being used to deny honest claimants benefits to which they are entitled.

In his letter, Mr Field says that the three men have been unemployed for a considerable time, which is not surprising in view of the high unemployment in Birkenhead. All are responsible for young children.

They told him that they felt they had been interrogated, rather than interviewed, and they were told that benefits would be stopped. They said they were nervous, "not to say terrified" during the interview. They were told their right to benefit might continue for a short time if they signed a

letter, of which they were not allowed a copy.

"The gist of the letters was that they would spend part of their weekly benefit in advertising either in the local paper or in having bills printed to be distributed on a house to house basis advertising the fact that they were looking for work," Mr Field wrote.

He said yesterday that supplementary benefits were recognized to be the minimum subsistence level and were not high enough to allow for advertising costs. It was a task of the Department of Employment to find work but the local job-centre had told him it had not been approached by the local social security office for information about jobs that could be used in such interviews.

"This is a vicious move that illustrates a deeper problem: the widening gap between the Department of Health and Social Security, who pay benefits, and the Department of Employment, who attempt to find work."

Mr Field has asked Mr Jenkin to give him copies of the letters signed by his constituents and for his response to important policy considerations raised by the cases. He is asking whether the interviews were normal procedure or part of the anti-fraud drive for which the Government has set a target of saving £50m a year.



New graduates: Lieutenant Roland Playford, RM; Mr Graham Franklin, fishmonger; and WPC Angela Frederick.

## Mandatory grants to Open University students rejected

By Our Education Correspondent

High praise for students and staff at the Open University came from Mr Mark Carlisle, Secretary of State for Education and Science, yesterday, but he ruled out any chance in the immediate future of introducing mandatory grants for the students.

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## Court clears man who says he was framed

A man who claimed that the police planted a small amount of cannabis on him during a betting shop raid was cleared by the Court of Appeal yesterday of possessing the drug.

Lascelles Gordon, aged 37, unemployed, of Pynchley Road, East Dulwich, London, who was fined £100 at the Central Criminal Court on January 11,

1979, had his conviction quashed and sentence set aside.

Mr Justice Hodgson said Mr Gordon had not raised the defence that he "had" been framed until his trial, but it was his common law right to remain silent.

Judge Grieve had told the jury that they could draw any adverse inference from Mr

Gordon's non-protestation of innocence.

Mr Justice Hodgson added: "This was the plainest possible invitation to the jury to take as indicative of guilt the fact that this appellant had exercised his common law right of silence." But for the Judge's words Mr Gordon might have been acquitted.

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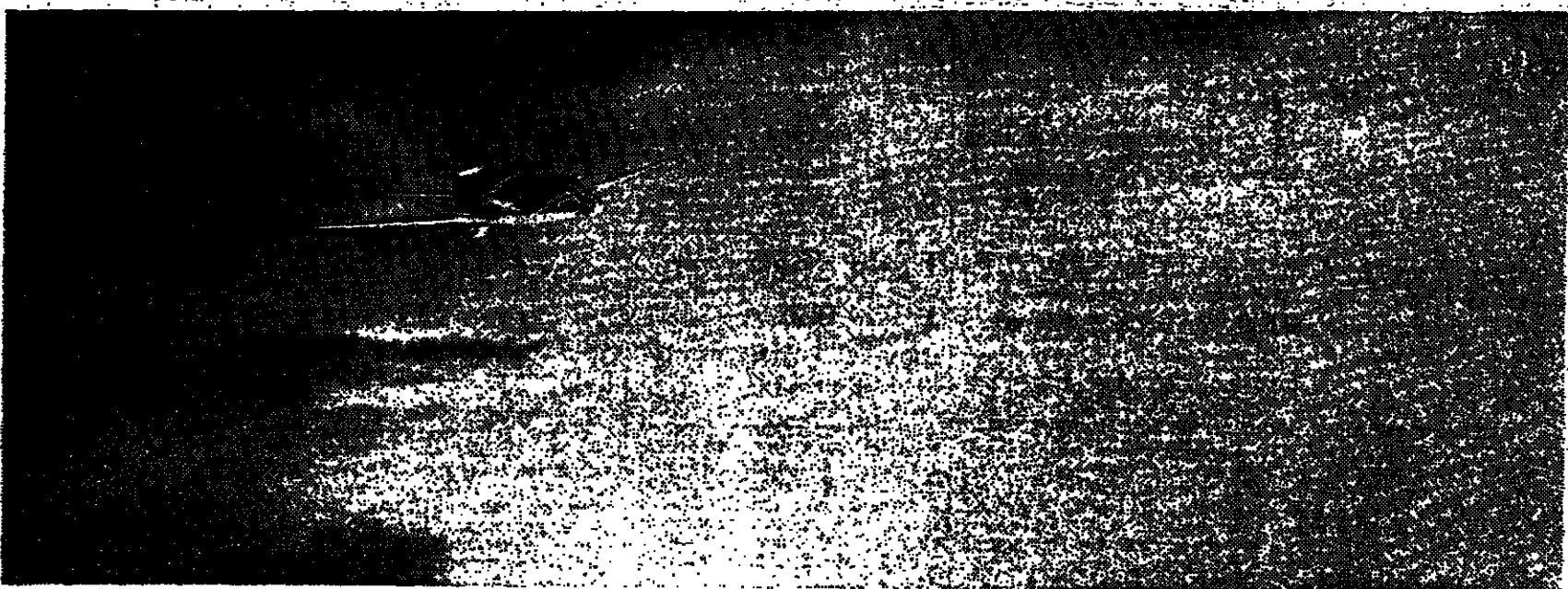
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## Mrs Castle deplores small percentage of woman members of Parliament

By Frances Gibb

Britain has the lowest percentage of women in parliament of any of the European countries, Mrs Barbara Castle, leader of the British Labour Group in the European Parliament, told a conference in London yesterday.

"History has given us the suffragettes; the forgers of freedom for women, only 3 per cent of our Parliament is made up of women," she told a conference on "Equal Rights under Attack" organized by the Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff.

By comparison, Denmark had 23.5 per cent; The Netherlands 14.7 per cent; Luxembourg 13.6 per cent; Belgium 11.8 per cent; Italy 8.3 per cent; Germany 8 per cent; Ireland 7.1 per cent and France 4.3 per cent. "In Britain we cannot hold up our heads over that," she said.

But Mrs Castle told the

conference, attended by about 40 delegates, that Britain led Europe in the use of its legislation for sex equality. Implementation of the Equal Pay Act, 1975 had been more effective in Britain than anywhere else in the European Community.

The ad hoc committee on women's rights of the European Parliament had just published a report, which showed that complaints against pay discrimination in other member states had been almost non-existent. "But in the United Kingdom they have been spectacular."

"In Luxembourg and Denmark, the report points out, there has been no recourse to the courts over equal pay. In Denmark and West Germany, there is no administrative supervision of the equal pay laws by the authorities. In Italy last year only 10 cases of pay discrimination were taken through the courts."

The inquest was told that Mrs Fryer, aged 57, bought the bird seven years ago and began feeling ill two years later. She had chest pains.

Doctors were unable to diagnose her illness until 12 months ago, by which time it was too late. She was admitted to hospital a week ago and died a day later.

Dr Elspeth Alstead, medical registrar, told the coroner the cause of death was respiratory failure caused by budgerigar disease.

The coroner said any budgerigar owner who suffered symptoms similar to Mrs Fryer's would be advised to get rid of the bird and seek immediate medical help.

The coroner recorded a verdict of death from natural causes.

In the United Kingdom, Mrs Castle said, the full implementation of the Act was followed by a flood of applications to tribunals. The total of 1,742 had now decreased to 343 because a number of test cases had been settled but that figure was still way ahead of elsewhere.

The trade unions had a vital role to play in making sex equality a reality, Mrs Castle said. "There is a long way to go. There are still far too few women in trade unions and the unions are not likely to recruit them as long as they present an almost exclusively male front in their top jobs and in their conferences."

Trade unions should use their position in the Labour Party to get more women into Parliament, she said. Passing laws was only the first stage. "It is up to women to implement them, improve them and change attitudes. And it is up to the trade unions to give women that opportunity."

## Budgerigar owners warned of disease

From Our Correspondent

Sheffield

A coroner yesterday warned budgerigar owners about a rare, fatal illness that could be caused by the birds. He was speaking at an inquest into the death of Mrs Florence Fryer, of Chaucer Road, Sheffield.

Dr Herbert Pilling, coroner for South Yorkshire, west, said: "I am not trying to cause a panic because few people are likely to develop this disease when they come into contact with budgerigars. It is the first time I have come across it and I feel it is so rare

it should be given some publicity.

The inquest was told that Mrs Fryer, aged 57, bought the bird seven years ago and began feeling ill two years later. She had chest pains.

Doctors were unable to diagnose her illness until 12 months ago, by which time it was too late. She was admitted to hospital a week ago and died a day later.

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"The disease is caused by allergic reaction to inhaled substances from certain proteins contained in budgerigars, usually caused by the dro



## HOME NEWS

## BMA aims to improve city health care by incentive payments

By Nicholas Timmins

The British Medical Association has proposed a series of incentive payments to doctors, nurses and health visitors in inner cities and other areas with poor family doctor services to try to bring the falling quality of such care.

The proposals are aimed at encouraging family doctors in such areas to retire earlier, and at increasing their income to meet the higher costs.

They would discourage general practitioners from running lists of only 1,000 patients, which allows the doctor to claim most of the basic National Health Service allowances and to earn extra income from private or other work outside the health service. They would also encourage doctors from maximizing their income by taking on so many patients that they cannot provide proper care.

The proposals have gone to the Family Health Care Study Group, which is due to report to the Department of Health later this year, and they have been sympathetically received by some of its members.

There has been increasing concern about the standard of care in some inner city areas. A report prepared by the Royal College of General Practitioners has shown that inner London has on average more doctors with small lists of patients, more with very large lists, more aged over 70 and more working single-handed than in the rest of the country.

In Kensington, Chelsea and

Westminster, one of the worst areas, one general practitioner in eight is aged over 70, and one in six has a list of fewer than 1,000 patients.

Figures for 1977 show that on average England and Wales have one in 50 have lists of less than 1,000 patients.

In Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster, more than three doctors in a hundred had lists of more than 3,500 patients in 1977, compared with fewer than two in a hundred in the rest of the country, where the average list is about 2,200.

The British Medical Association said yesterday that the difficulties of running good family doctor services included a very mobile population, high turnover of nursing staff and high costs.

The association said also that a doctor might be refused permission to start a practice in inner London because the proportion of general practitioners to population is high.

The BMA's proposals would allow doctors working in underprivileged areas one year's credit towards retirement for every five years worked, so that a doctor who worked there throughout his career could retire at 55. Extra payments would be made when a new patient registered, and for night visits. In addition, a higher annual capitation fee would be paid for each patient, but only for doctors with lists of between 1,500 and 2,500 patients.

The association said also that a doctor might be refused permission to start a practice in inner London because the proportion of general practitioners to population is high.

## £540,000 for research into medical inequalities

From John Charrles

Manchester

A grant of £540,000 has been made by the Department of Health and Social Security to the department of general practice at Manchester University for research into inequalities of medical care in underprivileged inner city areas.

Concern about such inequalities was expressed in the 1980 royal commission report on the National Health Service and by the DRES working group chaired by Professor Sir Douglas Black, former professor of medicine at Manchester University and chief scientist to the department.

The university said yesterday that despite the concern, there was little detailed in-

formation about the extent and nature of the variations in medical services in the inner cities compared with other areas.

The grant will support a DRES research unit directed by Professor David Metcalfe, professor of general practice, initially for six years. It will concentrate at first on the relatively unhealed areas of Manchester and Salford.

More than 600 general practitioners will be interviewed about aspects of health that confront them in their surgeries and on visits, and about their own practices and attitudes. The accessibility, acceptability of doctors, community nurses, health visitors and social workers will also be considered.

Child mortality, page 9

## Man denies he intended to harm stepson

A man alleged to have ill-treated his stepson, aged two-and-a-half, by ducking him in a swimming pool, denied at Leeds Crown Court yesterday that he had any intention of harming the boy.

Steven James Greenwood said the boy "went under the water two, possibly three, times at the most, but I had no intention of harming him in any shape or form."

Mr Greenwood, aged 28, a bus driver, of Town Street, Stanningley, Leeds, has pleaded not guilty to wilfully ill-treating or exposing Terence Benjamin Ryan, a 2-year-old, to cause him unnecessary suffering or injury to health.

The trial continues today.

## Money too hot for thieves

Thieves worked through the night to open a safe, but when they eventually burnt off its side at offices of agricultural engineers in Banbury, they found only charred banknotes and cheques.

The owner said the heat from the thieves' cutting equipment set fire to the contents of about £150 in notes and cheques.

## Customs seeking 2,000 who overpaid duty

The Customs and Excise department is trying to trace two thousand people who have been overcharged duty on cars imported into Britain.

The errors emerged during an investigation by the Ombudsman into the case of a Briton returning to this country who was given wrong information by a Customs officer as to when he could resell his imported car without paying duty and value-added tax.

When he came to sell his car he was faced with an unexpected bill of £213 for customs charges but during the Ombudsman's inquiry into the case an error in assessing charges was found.

Charges can be assessed in two ways: on the value of the car at the time of import and the rate of duty and tax in force at that time; or the value of the car when it is sold and the rates in force then.

Customs charge whichever is the lower and in recent years they have invariably been the second option, but when VAT went up from 8 to 15 per cent in 1979 it made the first option more favourable.

Customs say 2,000 people have been overcharged by more than £5.

## WEST EUROPE AND OVERSEAS

## Left wing fights against pay restraint programme

## Belgian Socialist leader resigns

From Michael Hornsby

Brussels, Jan 27

Against a background of deepening economic crisis and mounting social unrest, the Belgian Government has been dealt a severe blow by the announcement that the leader of one of the two main parties in the coalition is to resign.

Mr André Cools, president of the Socialist Party, which governs in partnership with the Christian Democrats, disclosed last night that he will not be standing for reelection at his party's congress next month.

The decision comes after a period of increasing tension between Mr Cools and left-wing members of his party and the FGTF, the socialist-affiliated trade union organization, over his support for the Government's economic recovery plan, which includes a two-year freeze on wage rises.

The last straw for Mr Cools, it appears, was the decision last week of several Socialist MPs to vote against the pay restraint policy.

Mr Cools has been a powerful ally of Prime Minister, who is a Flemish Socialist Democrat. Even if Mr Cools is replaced, as is thought likely, by Mr Guy Spilael, the Deputy Prime Minister, who also supports the economic austerity measures, growing dissension within the Socialist Party and trade union estrangement could bring down the coalition.

Steel workers in Liege came out on strike today in protest against a government plan to merge Belgium's biggest steel works, which would cut 2,000 and 4,000 men out of work. Steel workers in Charleroi are already on strike.

At Verriers and Tubize, also in the economically depressed, French-speaking southern half of the country, groups of textile workers have been on a hunger strike this month because of threatened plant closures.

Other textile workers have been blocking road and rail links to and from the two towns during certain hours of the day, causing the diversion of

domestic and international traffic.

To add to its troubles, the Government learnt from British Leyland today that the decision to close the company's Belgian assembly plant for Allegros and Minis at Seneffe was "irrevocable". Belgium will now try to persuade a Japanese car manufacturer to take the plant over and save the 2,800 jobs at risk. Anti-British feeling is running high at the plant, which has never had a strike or a work stoppage in 17 years.

Mr Peter Wakefield, the British Ambassador to Belgium, has been summoned to a meeting with Mr Martens tomorrow in what is seen as a last-ditch effort to prevent closure of the plant and save jobs.

The growing industrial unrest follows a demonstration last weekend in Brussels by between 80,000 and 100,000 trade unionists against the Government's economic austerity programme. It is feared that this could signal the end of union passivity in the face of rising unemployment levels, already the highest in Europe.

## Bonn's defence budget survives revolt by left

From Patricia Clough

Bonn, Jan 27

An attempt by 24 left-wing Social Democrats to have West Germany's defence budget reduced by DM 1,000m (about £210m) has been firmly stifled by the SPD parliamentary party.

Its rejection has removed for the present one of the many pressures besetting Herr Helmut Schmidt, the Chancellor, while yet more have come to a head.

The resolution by the 24 left-wingers to switch DM1,000m from the defence budget to development aid has been interpreted here as an indirect move against the dual NATO decision on medium-range nuclear missiles, which is a fundamental pillar of the Government's defence policy.

As well as the production and stationing of medium-range nuclear missiles, the SPD provides for negotiations with the Soviet Union on a balanced reduction of missile numbers.

It was the first time the rest-les SPD had flexed its muscles in the new Bundestag. During the last parliament, when Herr Schmidt had a much narrower majority, a smaller group of left-wingers had on occasions forced him to modify legislation and sometimes left the coalition in a minority.

Now Herr Schmidt's majority is bigger, but so is the left wing. About a quarter of the 218 deputies are rated as left-wingers.

As it was, the move by the 24 did not get far. After a long discussion last night, the parliamentary party approved a resolution presented by its executive ruling out any cuts in defence spending and calling for efforts to increase development aid.

Thirty-seven deputies voted against the resolution. Their reasons were not given, but it looked as if the group of 24 had attracted some supporters.

Earlier, Herr Schmidt, Herr Willy Brandt, the party chairman, and Herr Hans A. Hoff, the Defence Minister, spoke emphatically against any tampering with the Government's de-

fence policy. They pointed out that West Germany had international defence commitments which could not be changed for domestic considerations.

They also argued that it was essential that West Germany's defence policy should be considered reliable and, by its allies, particularly in the United States, would suffer.

A spokesman for the Free Democrats, the SPD's coalition partners, gave warning earlier that if the move by the 24 was not suppressed the coalition would be in danger of falling apart.

Disagreement and discontent in the coalition are one of the Chancellor's biggest problems, and today he moved to tackle the most intractable issue.

He decided to take personal charge of efforts to reach a compromise between the FDP, which backs the SPD, and the SPD on adjustments to the *Mitbestimmung*, the laws concerning worker participation on the supervisory boards of the coal and steel industry.

The highly complex issue has brought into conflict basic principles of the two parties on which both are reluctant to yield, they failed to reach agreement on it during the coalition negotiations after the October elections, and efforts to reach a compromise have severely strained the partnership.

An attempt by the Chancellor and other SPD leaders to settle another tricky problem has, in effect, failed. They could not agree a common position with the north German Social Democrats over the future of a big nuclear power station at Brokdorf, north of Hamburg.

For a variety of reasons both the local Social Democrats and the Free Democrats are divided among themselves about Brokdorf, which has been the scene of violent anti-nuclear protest demonstrations. The meeting ended with a somewhat lame recommendation to the local politicians, local authorities and firms to seek the broadest possible agreement on energy policy.

Leading article, page 15

## Eight doctors in Paris test case on abortion

From Ian Murray

Paris, Jan 27

Eight doctors have gone on trial in Paris in a test case over the abortion law. Although they are accused of making a fortune by abusing the law, it is clear as the case progresses that it is the law itself which is on trial.

The case concerns the events at a clinic called La Pergola in a poor district of northern Paris. The police began their inquiry there after one of the doctors, horrified that an abortion had been carried out on a girl who was five months pregnant, reported the matter. He is himself now one of the eight accused.

The two main offences of which the doctors are accused concern either carrying out abortions or on the one hand, women whose pregnancy was further advanced than the tenth week. In the background is evidence that up to 15,000 francs (£1,360) was being charged for an abortion.

In addition to the doctors, five relatives of the girls who had abortions carried out at the clinic, are also charged with offences under the abortion law.

Dr Aimé Marchand, the director of La Pergola, who has spent the past 15 months in prison awaiting trial, told the court that the case had been brought only because the policy of the Government had changed after Simone Veil had left the Health Ministry and M. Christian Bonnet, the Minister of the Interior, began to involve himself in the law.

"Mme Veil represented tolerance," M Bonnet represents repression," he said. "They (the Government) have launched a policy for increasing the birth rate and they are carrying out a witch hunt."

## Swiss offices bombed

Milan, Jan 27.—A woman was injured when a powerful bomb exploded at the Swiss tourist office here, wrecking cars and destroying the Bureau. A second bomb went off at a Swiss-air office.

## W Germans join fray in EEC fishing debate

From Michael Hornsby

Brussels, Jan 27

The crisis over EEC fisheries policy deepened here today as agriculture ministers failed to reach a deal on the so-called "fishery" package.

This was a demand from Herr Josef, Ertl, the West German minister, for swift ratification of an EEC agreement with Canada on reciprocal fishing rights.

It would permit Community vessels to catch 14,500 tonnes of cod and 7,000 tonnes of squid in Canadian waters this year, in return for tariff concessions on Canadian fish exports, mainly to Britain.

The West German deep sea fleet would get the major share of this catch, and their fishermen, who are mounting a protest blockade of Cuxhaven and threatening to extend it to other ports, say they must have access to Canadian waters by the end of February because encroaching winter ice will make fishing impossible after March.

Notification was held up mainly by Britain. Mr Peter Walker, the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, told an angry and table-dumping Herr Ertl that there was "no way the British Government could agree to the Canadian deal."

Discussions on the share-out between member states of the fish caught within the EEC's 200-mile limits, and of the related issue of access to coastal waters broke no new ground.

Negotiations on these two questions broke down last month, mainly because of French resistance to Britain's demands for control of the activity of foreign vessels in its coastal waters.

The ministers will meet again in Brussels on February 9 and 10.

## East and West fail to agree on disarmament formula

From Richard Wigg

Madrid, Jan 27

The second phase of the European security review conference opened here today, with delegations from the West and the communist countries far apart on the conditions they would accept for holding any disarmament conference within the framework of the Helsinki Act.

Rival proposals for holding such a conference are likely to be the chief business occupying this second phase, with the West favouring a "verified" disarmament as a propaganda exercise designed to lure Western public opinion into a false sense of security, and preferring a French proposal limited strictly to additional confidence-building measures of a verifiable nature in the land military sphere.

The French proposal also looms over the holding of a third follow-up conference on the Helsinki process itself, on the lines of this Madrid meeting, which began its first phase last November.

With the United States delegation awaiting instructions on

the attitude to adopt towards the French proposal from the new Reagan Administration, Mr Max Kampelman, who continues as its leader, concentrated in his speech today on condemning further violations of human rights by the Soviet Union while the conference was in recess.

Britain today also expressed growing concern about an apparent recent intensification of discriminatory measures against Jews in the Soviet Union.

Détente does not exist today as an accurate description of East-West relations," the Russians were told flatly today by Mr Kampelman.

But the chief United States delegate went on to emphasize that détente still remained an American objective.

Mr Kampelman is expected in Washington at the weekend to clarify the US position on the French proposal from Mr Alexander Haig, the new Secretary of State. Most Western delegations hope, and expect that this first indication of the new Administration's line on an important foreign policy field will draw the United States closer to its NATO allies.

## Rhine nations reject plan to clean river

From Our Correspondent

Paris, Jan 27

France has failed to convince the four other countries touched by the Rhine (Switzerland, West Germany, Luxembourg and Holland) to accept the idea of building a salt extraction plant as the best way of cleaning up the river.

Instead a meeting of environmental ministers from all five countries in The Hague agreed yesterday that, failing the prospect of an excess salt into the ground below Alsace (a solution rejected by France), then the waste from the French potash mines would have to be transported either by barge to the North Sea or else taken away in a special pipeline.

## Sanity regained after professor's 28-year fight

From Charles Hargrove

Paris, Jan 27

The French, who are willingly inclined to paradox, often think that the people who use asylums, and those who are mad are most frequently to be met outside them.

The case of M. Marc Blanc-Lapierre, aged 55, who was wrongly interned for 11 years, from 1952 to 1963, would seem to prove the point.

M. Blanc-Lapierre was sufficiently sane to pass several university examinations during his period of internment. He had written several books of scientific worth—he is a professor of mathematics—and even set up a "psychiatric university" in the Marchant hospital in Toulouse where he was detained.

He gave lectures in science



A victim of the Laingsburg floods is reunited with her daughters after being rescued from the Buffels river which carried her and her husband more than 10 miles.

## Relief funds set up for flood victims

From Our Own Correspondent

Johannesburg, Jan 27

While rescue workers continued their search for victims of the Laingsburg floods, Mr Pieter Botha, the South African Prime Minister, announced today that he had set up a special Cabinet committee to assess the damage and losses in the disaster area.

President Marais Viljoen has set up a relief fund for flood victims. Several organizations, including a Cape Town newspaper and a supermarket chain, have also set up their own disaster funds.

An official death toll has still not been announced. However, authoritative sources said it was certain to be more than 100 dead and could be as high as 200, making it South Africa's worst natural disaster.

So far rescue workers, including the police, Army, Air Force and civilians, have found only a few bodies. It is feared that many of the victims may never be found as their bodies are hidden under tons of mud. Some survivors were rescued as far as the Buffels river before reaching safety.

Laingsburg was the town most seriously affected by the flood, but other towns and villages in the south-western Cape were also damaged. They include Ladysmith, Worcester, Montagu, Robertson and Swellendam. Millions of pounds worth of damage has been done to crops and livestock.

## Mr Nkomo takes on new Cabinet tasks in Salisbury compromise

From Stephen Taylor

Salisbury, Jan 27

The crisis threatening Zimbabwe's coalition Government passed tonight with a statement by Mr Robert Mugabe, the Prime Minister, that a compromise had been reached over the position in the Cabinet of Mr Joshua Nkomo, leader of the minority Patriotic Front party.

Mr Nkomo, who was demoted in the Cabinet reshuffle two weeks ago and offered the portfolio of Minister of Public Services, had been appointed Minister Without Portfolio with special responsibilities.

The agreement between the two men comes after a week in which they are believed to have met almost daily. The Patriotic Front Central Committee had earlier passed a document to Mr Mugabe, stating anxiety over the fact that the replacement of Mr Nkomo as Minister of Home Affairs effectively deprived the party of any say in internal security.

Under the agreement Mr Nkomo retains his position on the Cabinet committee on security, and will take on additional responsibilities by assisting Mr Mugabe in his role as Minister of Defence.

The list of new deputy ministers is to be announced on Thursday.

American aid: The United States is to provide Zimbabwe with a further \$20m (£8.3m) for education, health and agricultural projects under a new agreement signed here today.

The grant, which amounts to about \$50m the aid provided by Washington to Mr Mugabe's Government since independence last year.

Foreign aid is a vital part of the government's programme to acquire land owned by white farmers and redistribute it among blacks. Mr Mugabe has said that the amount contributed by Britain for this project has been "far from adequate".

Mr Nkomo's main aide, who will take over the portfolio of Transport, Mr Mugabe had suggested in announcing the cabinet reshuffle. Mr Chinamano does not have a seat in the House of Assembly, but may be appointed by the Patriotic Front to fill the seat vacated by Mr Ariston Chamusca, who has been appointed Ambassador to West Germany.

The only remaining element in the compromise formula still to be disclosed is whether Mr Nkomo has successfully negotiated further deputy ministries for his party.

It is believed that in the document sent to Mr Mugabe he sought further posts to the additional one deputy ministry offered by the Prime Minister.

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## Boy is shot dead in Copperbelt mine riot

Lusaka, Jan 27.—A 14-year-old boy was shot dead and about 50 people were injured when police stepped in yesterday to quell a riot at a mine township in the Zambian Copperbelt, the official press reported today.

The death was the first reported in more than a week of industrial unrest which began in the country's vital copper and cobalt industry and spread to the banking and insurance sector.

The Times of Zambia, run by the ruling United National Independence Party, said the shooting took place when police moved in to break up a riot and a bullet hit the boy, who was walking home from school. The shooting angered the crowd, which went through the township stoning vehicles and setting up roadblocks, the paper said.—Reuter.

Serious challenges: The labour unrest on the Copperbelt poses the most serious challenge to President Kaunda's rule since last October's alleged coup attempt which led to the detention of a number of prominent Zambians (Nicholas Ashford writes from Johannesburg).

The mineworkers, who have been striking in protest at the dismissal from Unip of 17 senior trade union officials, have the power to inflict extensive damage to Zambia's already ailing economy because the copper they produce generates 95 per cent of the country's foreign exchange earnings.

Furthermore, the Mineworkers Union of Zambia and the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions, which the expelled officials belonged, are the most powerful organizations in the country not controlled by the party.

The unions and the government have been on a collision course since last year, though a general strike would be called and President Kaunda only managed to head this off by threatening to implicate the unions in last year's coup attempt.

Officially, the unions' growing opposition to President Kaunda's Administration is due to the Government's failure to improve pay and conditions of employment. However, there are important political factors as well. In particular, they want to curb the growing power of the party and especially the party's Central Committee, the country's chief policy-making body.

The party's decision to expel the union leaders followed continuous union opposition to a new system of local government introduced last year. The system requires both voters and candidates in local government elections to be party members, and is the main plank in the party's attempts to consolidate the nation's policies under its control.

The unions have argued that the new local government system created a costly new bureaucracy when scarce funds would be better spent on creating jobs and improving social services.

The Government believes that the trades unions' activities have begun taking on political overtones.

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## OVERSEAS

## Mr Reagan promises 'swift retribution' for future terrorists

From Patrick Brogan  
Washington, Jan 27

President Reagan welcomed the hostages back to America today, just a week after they left Iran and he himself took office. Standing before a large crowd at the White House, he gave a warning that any other kidnapping of American diplomats would meet with swift retribution.

"Let terrorists be aware", he said, "that when the rules of international behaviour are violated, our policy will be one of swift and effective retribution. We hear it said that we live in an era of limits to our power. Well, let it also be understood there are limits to our patience."

The hostages arrived at the White House at 2.30 pm after a 90-minute drive from Andrews Air Force base. There were a quarter of a million people lining the streets, cheering the convoy of buses and their police and military escorts.

There were yellow ribbons everywhere, in reference to the song "I'll hang a yellow ribbon on the old oak tree" which marks the return of a prisoner. Ever since the very first days after the hostages were captured in November 1979, ribbons have been draped around trees in various parts of the country.

Today the ribbons were everywhere. The Treasury building, a severe grey granite edifice, had ribbons alternating columns of its long portico. On closer inspection, they turned out to be paper cut outs, in the shape of bows, but they made a jolly and slightly bizarre sight.

There were endless signs of welcome. Mr Bruce Laingen, the senior diplomat among the hostages, remarked on one in particular: "IRS welcomes you back." IRS is the Internal Revenue Service.

There were about 7,000 people in the back garden of the White House, to cheer the hostages and to hear the President. There, the American ambassadors representing those

countries that had played a part in negotiating the hostages' release, with the Algerian in pride of place but also with the British, West German and Swiss ambassadors.

The 52 hostages who returned a week ago were joined this afternoon by Mr Richard Quene, the hostage who developed multiple sclerosis in captivity and was released last year. Their families were there, and so were the families of the eight soldiers who died in the unsuccessful rescue attempt last April.

Mr Reagan told them: "You are home and, believe me, you are welcome. You've come home to a people who, for 444 days, suffered the pain of your imprisonment, prayed for your safety, and, most importantly, shared your determination that the spirit of free men and women is not a fit subject for harassment."

After the official welcome on the White House lawn, there was a reception in the East Room. Mr Reagan presented each of the hostages with an American flag in a case.

There were to be fireworks this evening and the former hostages and their families will celebrate the occasion again, before returning home for rest and recuperation. Mr Reagan disclosed yesterday that about a dozen of them still suffer from psychological problems as a result of their captivity.

Two of the President's most senior staff, Mr Ed Meese, Counselor, and Mr James Baker, Chief of Staff, said today that the agreements with Iran are still being examined but would probably be honoured in full. Iranian companies have already started placing orders with American firms, who are consulting the Treasury as to whether they should reply.

Those companies that did business with Iran before the revolution have claims, some of them very large, against Iran that are to be examined by the claims commission set up as part of the agreement on the release of the hostages.

## Ill-treatment stories are played down by hostages

From Michael Leapman  
West Point, Jan 27

Forty-one of the 52 former American hostages, in their first formal public appearance since their release from Iran last week, seemed anxious to play down reports of ill-treatment at the hands of their captors.

At today's press conference at West Point, the military academy, where they have been relaxing with their families since returning from Germany on Sunday, they would not go into detail about what they had been through.

This may have been by instruction from the State Department. The press conference was voluntary for the former hostages and it was surprising that so many of them agreed to submit themselves to reporters who have been hounding them since their release. As it turned out, they provided less detailed information about their captivity than they have done during casual meetings with reporters here and in Germany.

One of the Marines, Sergeant Johnny McKeel, gave the platoon answer when asked about reports that some of the returned hostages are suffering from mental difficulties.

"All the people I've talked to are all right," he said. "As soon as we get home and go back to chasing women it will be all right."

Colonel Thomas Schaefer, the air attaché at the embassy, explained the temporary difficulty in adjusting to freedom. "During captivity, the greatest problem was what to have with the rice," he said. "Then 48 hours later we are in Germany and President Carter is embracing us with tears in his eyes. It takes time to adjust."

Miss Elizabeth Swift, one of the two women held, warned the press against misreporting allegations of ill-treatment. She complained that she had been misled by the subject in *Newsweek*.



Former hostage Mr Charles Jones receiving an emotional welcome from his family.

Sergeant William Gallegos of the Marines said: "The captors were good to us by their own standards... but we were not being treated well."

None of the former hostages would be drawn into criticism of the Carter Administration's actions before their capture or during it. The closest to a critical comment came from Mr Bruce Laingen, the charge d'affaires at the Embassy. Discussing the aborted rescue mission last April, he said he took "a very strong view about anything that could have endangered our lives."

Mr Victor Tomseth, senior political officer, answered by saying that the United States Government had set a prece-

dent, by negotiating with terrorists. "If you look beyond the rhetoric in previous terrorist incidents, there is a precedent for negotiation 'except when it ended in death'," he said.

Mr John Graves, public affairs officer at the embassy, said that the press had not reported properly the real aim of the young people who stormed the embassy. They were, he said, genuine students and at the beginning their call for the return of the Shah to Iran was a pretext cloaking their true intentions.

Details of how the captives passed the time were given by Mr William Kaough, head of the American school in Paldi-

san, who was visiting the embassy when it was taken. During the 14 months and a half they had read a lot and written notes about their experiences. During periodic inspection the Iranians would take away what they had written, so they would write it out again until some of them knew it by heart.

About 300 reporters attended the press conference in Eisenhower Hall, a large auditorium in the academy grounds. It was televised live.

Mr Laingen was the moderator and made an opening speech expressing gratitude for the welcome they had received on behalf of "this embassy in exile which goes out of business officially today."

## Tehran uses film to repudiate US claims

From Tony Allaway  
Tehran, Jan 27

Iranian officials tonight confirmed they were sending filmed interviews with each of the 52 American hostages abroad for the world to judge allegations of maltreatment.

Mr Ahmad Azizi, former head of hostage affairs in the Prime Minister's office, told a press conference that half an hour from the film, which is between four and five hours long, had already been used on television last Saturday.

Mr Azizi said that in the interviews with one of their student captors, some of the hostages "might" complain of psychological torture concerning the length of their confinement. "But, in general, nothing is contrary to what Carter and the others have said," he added.

At the press conference Mr Bahzad Nabavi, Minister of State and a government spokesman, further countered internal criticism of the deal that freed the hostages, amid growing signs that the Government would be able to ride the storm of protest over the accord.

Mr Nabavi questioned the policy of the two leading moderate papers in running daily leading articles condemning the deal, saying it only provided ammunition for the BBC and foreign papers to use against Iran.

In the foreign press, the solution is referred to as if the United States has paid ransom, but in Iran they say the opposite, he said. As he spoke, it was apparent that the campaign against the deal in the two newspapers, *Moshir* and *Habib*, was beginning to lose steam.

Mr Nabavi also indicated that Iran was willing to reopen diplomatic relations with Canada, provided it undertook "not to engage in spying or assisting spying activities."

In the meantime, he said, the help the Canadians gave to six American diplomats to flee from Iran during the crisis

In brief  
Falklands move draws protest

Argentina has expressed "deep concern" at reports that the Falkland Islands is seeking to encourage people to move from St Helena to settle in the islands, to help fill job vacancies (our Diplomatic Correspondent writes). Mr Anthony Williams, the British Ambassador in Buenos Aires, has been told that such a move would prejudice possible future negotiations, according to the Argentine Foreign Ministry.

The Foreign Office said yesterday that immigration is a matter for the Falklands Islands Government, not Britain.

**Indian cosmonaut**  
Dedhi, Jan 27.—The Soviet Union could put an Indian cosmonaut into space as early as 1992 if a decision on selecting the spaceman is taken now, Lieutenant-General Georgi Beregovoy, head of the Soviet cosmonaut training centre, said.

**Hope fades**  
Bodo, Norway, Jan 27.—Rescue officials hold out little hope for the four missing crew from a Greek cargo ship, *Deifivos*, that sank off Norway's north coast, a spokesman said. Five bodies have been recovered and 29 crew have been rescued.

**Less sparkle**  
Eggen, Jan 27.—Sales of champagne dropped by more than 4 per cent to 175,466,231 bottles last year because of a poor wine harvest in 1978 and 1979, the Champagne Wine Producers Association said.

**Bets closed**  
Rome, Jan 27.—The public prosecutor today issued 50 arrest warrants, 22 of them for crooks, and ordered the closure of the casinos at San Remo on the Italian Riviera.

**Guerrilla demand**  
Bogota, Jan 27.—Guerrillas holding Mr Chesed Bitterman, the American linguist, demanded publication of a statement in American, European and Latin American newspapers as a condition for his release.

## Haig speaks rewrites the grammar

From William Safire  
New York, Jan 27

A new linguistic term called *Haigravitation* is rearing its head in Washington. It is the tendency of the new Secretary of State to change the state of parts of speech—from noun to adverb, from noun to verb.

The new top man at Foggy Bottom, former General Alexander Haig, studied his testimony at confirmation hearings with locations such as "I'll have to caveat my response, senator, and I'll caveat that."

Caveat, as used by generals like Julius Caesar, is the third-person singular present subjunctive of the Latin *caveo*, to beware. Standing by itself, caveat in Latin means "let him beware". In English, the word is a noun synonymous with warning. It is also part of the Latin phrase caveat emptor, let the buyer beware.

Until now, caveat has been a noun: in *Haigravitation*, it has become a verb. "I'll caveat that" means, presumably, "I'll say that with this warning." (I'll caveat the reader that this location will soon be followed in literary circles with "I'll asterisk that.")

Not to be outdone, Senator John Glenn asked the witness: "Will you burden-share?" This is a heavy new verb formed from burden-sharing, diplomatic jargon for "my taxpayers won't kick in any more until yours do."

But Mr Glenn is not in Mr Haig's verbiage league. Not in the way you contextualized it. Senator was a four-star reply about immorality in high places. To context something, in this lingo, is to place it in context.

Mr Haig has a history of this sort of thing. In hearings last year, the former general said something like: "There are nuance-al differences between Henry Kissinger and me on that." The exact quotation cannot be found because "nuance-al" or "nuansie" was expunged from the written record of the hearing by some unknown hand, and "differences of nuance" put in.—New York Times News Service.

## FBI clears the way for new Labour Secretary

From David Cross  
Washington, Jan 27

To the great relief of President Reagan, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has uncovered no evidence of illegal or unethical behaviour by Mr Raymond Donovan, his choice for Secretary of Labour.

At a confirmation hearing by the Senate labour and human resources committee today, Mr Francis Mullen, Assistant Director of the FBI, said that he and his colleagues had conducted a "thorough and exhaustive" investigation into allegations of contacts between Mr Donovan and organized crime figures, as well as claims that his building firm had been involved in underhand dealings to trade union officials.

In its determination to leave no stone unturned, some 120 people had been interviewed in "the most extensive" inquiry into the background of any Cabinet nominee. Mr Mullen said. The investigation had failed to develop any information to substantiate several allegations made against the Labour Secretary-designate or the Schiavone Construction Company of New Jersey, he added.

The FBI's failure to come up with any incriminating evidence against Mr Donovan should lead to the swift approval of his nomination by the Senate committee and then by the full Senate.

The hearing into his suitability for the post of Labour

Secretary opened alongside all the other Senate investigations into Mr Reagan's Cabinet nominees a couple of weeks before the new President's inauguration last Tuesday.

The hope then was that all the secretaries designate would be confirmed by Wednesday or Thursday of last week. But when the allegations of impropriety against Mr Donovan were raised a couple of weeks ago, Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah, chairman of the labour committee, postponed the hearings until after the FBI had checked fully.

Not only have the original allegations against Mr Donovan been a source of some embarrassment to Mr Reagan, but the delay in his confirmation has also highlighted the fact that the replacement of senior officials in the various government departments is proceeding much more slowly than the new administration had originally hoped.

Soon after his election last November Mr Reagan promised that his new Administration would "hit the ground running" the moment he assumed power formally on January 20.

But although the confirmation of most members of his Cabinet was concluded by the Senate last week, many more junior ministers are still waiting for their nominations to be approved formally. In addition, there are still many vacancies among the several hundred senior government posts reserved for political appointees.

## Abscam defendant guilty

From Our Own Correspondent  
Washington, Jan 27

Mr Richard Kelly, the most colourful of those accused of political corruption during the so-called Abscam investigation, has become the sixth member of Congress to be found guilty of charges against him.

After six hours of deliberations here, a federal jury decided that videotape recordings showing Mr Kelly stuffing

\$25,000 (£10,400) in cash into his pockets were sufficiently good evidence to convict him.

The recordings suggested that Mr Kelly had accepted the money in return for promising to do what he could to help two fictitious Arab sheikhs to immigrate to the United States. The wealthy "Arabs" were in fact disguised agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Throughout the trial, Mr Kelly protested his innocence.

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## Cuba alerted in case US invades

Havana, Jan 27.—Cuba is preparing its people militarily and psychologically for an assault on its 22-year-old revolution by the Reagan Administration.

Only hours after Mr Reagan took the oath of office, President Fidel Castro presided over a ceremony in which men and women of the island's new People's Militia swore to defend the revolution to the death.

The volunteer militia units, with regular Army instructors, are being organized and trained throughout Cuba. Señor Radu Castro, the Minister of Armed Forces and the President's brother, said recently: "We can expect an increase in hostility against our country."

President Castro said last month: "Nobody knows exactly what Reagan proposes to do. We have to be ready to meet any Republican platform, the public statements of the candidate, and the thinking reflected by the advisers of the new President." This thinking was, extremely reactionary and dangerous, he added.

the regular Army, battle-hardened in African campaigns and equipped with modern weapons, will be supported by the People's Militia, which could enrol more than a million Cubans.

Should the country be occupied, Dr Castro foresees a prolonged guerrilla war based on the traditions of Cuba's 30 years of struggle against Spanish rule in the nineteenth century, and the guerrilla war he led himself against the government of President Batista in the 1950s.

Dr Castro has called for a "patriotic war against invaders in which men, women and children would fight without quarter and use any weapon available, even machetes."

Most Western diplomats in Havana believe that Dr Castro is using the occasion to create a climate of immediate danger to unite the people behind the Government. Cuba's communist leaders say that it is their "historic responsibility" to prepare the people for any contingency.

Dr Castro has recently said:

"If they dare to invade our country, more Yankees will die here than died in the Second World War."

He recalled what he said were earlier United States efforts to destroy the revolution. He predicted that under Mr Reagan, the Central Intelligence Agency would be given a free hand, and appealed to the new president to prohibit the CIA from drawing up plans to assassinate foreign leaders.

Cuba's military doctrine, elaborated during years of intense work, is, in the first place, defence against landings, by active resistance... skillfully combined with energetic and opportunistic offensive action."

If an olive branch is offered, we will not reject it, but let nobody believe that Cuba will compromise on its principles. Cuba is and will continue to be a friend of the Soviet Union. Cuba is and will continue to be internationalist."

The term "internationalist" refers to Cuba's active support for revolutionary movements throughout the world.—Reuter.







Law Report January 27 1981

# Ban to stay on TV drug film

Scherings Chemicals Ltd v Falkman Ltd and Others

Before Lord Denning, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Shaw and Lord Justice Templeman.

With Lord Denning dissenting, the Court of Appeal refused to discharge an injunction restraining Scherings Chemicals Ltd from showing a film called "The Primodos Affair" which was a documentary on the drug that was used in pregnancy testing until its withdrawal in 1973. Two actions by mothers of deformed children claiming compensation against Scherings Chemicals Ltd, the drug manufacturers, are due to start in October.

The majority of the court, Lord Justice Shaw and Lord Justice Templeman, held that there had been breach of confidence by Mr David Elstein, the producer of the film, in disclosing to the public the information given to him when he gave a television course to Scherings executives. Their Lordships dismissed an appeal by Elstein and Scherings, who sought an order of Mr Justice McNeill granting the injunction last August.

Mr Oliver Popplewell, QC, and Mr Christopher Sumner for Mr Elstein and Scherings; Mr Roy Beldam, QC, Mr Gavin Lieberman, and Mr John Fowles for Scherings.

The MASTER OF THE ROLLS said that the film was made "The Primodos Affair" at much expense. It was about a matter of great public interest—the use of the drug Primodos. Scherings, its makers, wanted to stop the showing of the film on the grounds that it would be a contempt of court or a breach of confidence.

Should the film be stopped or not? Or would the injunction be an unwarranted restraint on the freedom of the press (including television)? It was an important question on which the law was not yet settled.

It often happened that, when a woman missed her period, she was anxious to know if she was pregnant or not. If she did not want a baby, she took something which, she hoped, would bring on her period. In 1973, the drug Primodos was found that Primodos was available for that purpose.

For nearly 10 years it was considered safe. But in 1967, Dr Isabel Gal threw doubt on it. Her researches led to many investigations by specialists. As a result of the inquiries, the Committee on the Safety of Medicines, Scherings withdrew the drug in January, 1978.

Neither Elstein nor Scherings were at liberty to use any private information without the consent of Scherings; or to use any public information unless they did the same. But they were at liberty to use public information by collecting it themselves, as they said, and to use any idea which came into their heads by reason of the course. Ideas were not the subject of confidence; nor of breach of confidence.

How far was it proper for the court to grant an injunction to restrain publication by the press and television of such information? The freedom of the press did not mean that the press was free to publish anything, or to break a confidence, or to do anything that was unlawful. It meant that there was a presumption that the press should be free to publish anything that was lawful, and that the court should not interfere with it unless it was necessary to do so.

In exceptional cases, where the intended publication was plainly unlawful, the court might issue a prior restraint. It might grant an injunction to restrain publication of information which was confidential, or which was obtained by breach of confidence, or which was obtained by fraud, or which was obtained by other means which were unlawful.

The same principle was contained in the European Convention on Human Rights. Here, the court was concerned with the question of policy. What should be the policy of the law in relation to the freedom of the press? A question, our law should conform as far as possible with the provisions of the Convention. The European Convention, Lord Justice Shaw said, "must be narrowly interpreted".

At the meeting in August 1979, Scherings did not turn down the offer, but were nervous that such a programme might be in contempt of court.

A great mass of material was assembled by Mr Elstein, a research papers, periodicals, television programmes, etc.

In November 5, 1979 Scherings wrote to Mr Elstein making it clear that they would not co-operate in the proposed programme. They said: "In the circumstances we would be concerned that none of the information supplied to you in confidence should be utilised."

Mr Elstein's relationship with the preparation of the programme, he said he made it "not out of anything I was told during the training course but as a result of the independent research carried out by Sharon Gould and myself."

The matter was left over until Scherings saw the programme on August 1, 1980. It was to be broadcast on September 16. But on August 12 Scherings issued a writ and moved for an injunction which was granted by Mr Justice McNeill on August 27—not on the ground of contempt of court, but on the ground of breach of confidence. There was now an appeal to their Lordships.

Their Lordships had seen the film. It was a balanced and fair presentation, which on no reasonable objection could be made. It contained nothing whatever to prejudice the pending cases. Care would be taken to select for the trial a judge who had not seen the film. But even if he had, his judgment could not be influenced by it.

His Lordship could find no single piece of confidential information which was—or might have been—disclosed by Mr Elstein from the course. The only thing that was taken from the course was the idea that the new work took the form of the Primodos Affair, just as Shakespeare used Hamlet's character, and Tennessee used Mark Twain's character, so David Elstein used the information in the course. In each case the previous work was the launching-pad on which the new work took off. But no one would dispute the originality of the new work.

Mr Elstein was not directly employed by Scherings. The obligation to maintain confidentiality as to matters which he learned as an employee of Scherings would not arise from any contract between him and Scherings.

Within a month or so of the last training session Mr Elstein submitted his proposal to Scherings for the documentary, which was largely on my memory of the course. It was remarkable that he should have thought fit to make any such proposal to Scherings, except that the course was confidential and that he would be expected to respect that confidence. Not that Scherings knew any more, either.

When he consented to tell Scherings of his idea, he wrote on July 4, 1979, that "the treatment rests heavily on privileged information... the only basis on which we could make the film as proposed would be if Scherings were to cooperate fully and to render much of that information 'unprivileged'."

It was clear that Mr Elstein was using the word "privileged" as meaning, not to be revealed to anyone else without Scherings' consent. In other words, he was recognising that what he had learned from his participation in the course was confidential to him, and was not to be passed on without their assent.

That assent was not forthcoming. Mr Elstein's letter was written on July 4, 1979, that "the treatment rests heavily on privileged information... the only basis on which we could make the film as proposed would be if Scherings were to cooperate fully and to render much of that information 'unprivileged'."

There remained the question whether Scherings' remedy should consist only in damages. It was a case, in which the injury to the interests might be irreparable. They were a substantial and important enterprise as manufacturing and marketing of pharmaceuticals. They were entitled to be protected from what might be a serious and damaging breach of confidence.

The appeal was dismissed. Scherings' cross-appeal against the judge's refusal to grant an injunction to restrain publication of the film was dismissed.

Solicitors: Mr A. M. Gostyn; McKenna & Co.

Thames replied, asserting that making representations as to which witnesses, or parts of evidence, were the more suitable, as required by section 20(2) of the Criminal Law Act, 1977.

LORD JUSTICE DONALDSON said that section 20 made it clear that before a magistrate's court considered a case, it was suitable for summary trial, and before it asked the accused whether he consented to summary trial, it had to give the prosecution and the accused the opportunity of making representations as to which mode of trial was the more suitable.

In an affidavit the applicant stated that when he gave his consent to summary trial he was told that he had a right to be tried either by jury or in the magistrate's court, and that he never informed that he could make any representations.

The clerk had no recollection of the particular case, but it was a case, in which the injury to the interests might be irreparable. They were a substantial and important enterprise as manufacturing and marketing of pharmaceuticals. They were entitled to be protected from what might be a serious and damaging breach of confidence.

The Divisional Court granted an application for judicial review by Mr Hammer Constable, a printer of Wigston Road, Plaistow, and a deputy magistrate sitting at Horseferry Road Magistrates' Court that he was not entitled to withhold his consent to summary trial on the ground that the consent was vitiated by the court's failure to give him the opportunity of making representations as to which mode of trial was the more suitable.

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Court of Appeal

the programme would contain no material not freely available from other sources. It followed, so they contended, that no breach of confidence could arise from putting out the programme on television. They offered in due course to provide a view of the finished programme. Scherings' response through solicitors on February 8, 1980, was to reserve their position until the finished programme had been seen and to regenerate their position to seek the court's protection. They could hardly have stated their attitude more plainly or promptly.

The communication in a commercial context of information which at the time was regarded by the giver and recipient as confidential and the nature of which was a material component of the commercial interests of the party confiding that information, imposed on the recipient a duty of confidentiality unless the giver consented to relax it.

The obligation of confidentiality might be some circumstances overcome. If the subject-matter was something which was inimical to the public interest or threatened individual safety, a person in possession of knowledge of that subject-matter could not be obliged to conceal it although he acquired that knowledge in confidence. In some situations it might be his duty to reveal what he knew. If the subject-matter was something which was inimical to the public interest or threatened individual safety, a person in possession of knowledge of that subject-matter could not be obliged to conceal it although he acquired that knowledge in confidence.

It was said that the information which was the subject-matter of the programme was based on sources available to the public before the course with his assistance also. Mr Elstein, with the assistance of a colleague, had explored and collated all those sources, the relevant facts and opinions, and all to be found in what had been described as "the public domain" or the public sector. It was not the public sector, it was the public domain, and it was not the public domain, it was the public sector.

It was an argument which at best was cynical, some might regard it as specious. Even in the commercial field, ethics and good faith were not to be regarded as merely opportunistic or expedient. In any case, though facts might be widely known, it was not the facts which were the subject-matter of the programme. It was the way in which the facts were presented, the way in which they were analysed, the way in which they were interpreted, that was the subject-matter of the programme.

Barbara Comyns, mixing invention with reality.

"The only things that are true in this story" reads a short preface to an early novel by Barbara Comyns, "are the wedding and Chapters 10, 11 and 12 and the poverty". The disclaimer is necessary. To an unusual extent, Barbara Comyns is a writer who mixes invention with reality, giving to each the same weight, and drawing generously and without coyness on her own life for character and occasion. When she discusses her books it is to place them in her own past. Poverty and bleakness are things she knows about.

This week Virago are reissuing *The Vet's Daughter*, the story of a down-to-earth young girl called Alice, with a violent father "like a disappointed thunderstorm", who suddenly discovers that she can levitate.

Barbara Comyns dreamt the book. In an earlier version it came to her as the story of the girl, and mother later, it reappeared clearly as that of the oppressed daughter. "I usually do dream my books a bit", she says. "If I concentrate very hard on a story I can get out of my mind, even at night. While writing, I used to get up at five every morning to put it all down."

Started 35 years ago on her honeymoon in Snowdonia with her second husband, *The Vet's Daughter* was published in 1959 to wide critical acclaim. Since then it has been out of print. Barbara Comyns is one of those authors much praised for her style and particular, slightly quirky, stories, but there did not sell well and most of her eight novels which earned her fine reviews on

publication have disappeared from circulation. The mildly mystical approach to her subject, with its overtones of inescapable gloom, is expressed in final form in language so precise and economical—a way of writing acquired through much reading of Deleuze—so pared down of all unnecessary words that it conveys a sensation of truth, "of realism almost exaggerated" as she accurately puts it.

"Because I ended the book with a supposed newspaper cutting reporting the spectacle of Alice's levitation on Clapham Common, people thought it was true. The local papers produced articles asking if any of their older residents could remember the event."

Barbara Comyns herself, Alice's ability to float could well have been real. "People have levitated. I think I could do it myself if I were more spiritual, and if I really thought I could." As a child, she says, she believed she could walk on water but never quite reached the point of trying two feet at once.

Barbara Comyns is now 70, a diffident woman with a square face, which she has turned back to produce a sudden, awkward laugh. Her childhood features prominently and truthfully in her novels so that it would be quite possible to recreate her life with considerable accuracy if one knew what to look for.

One of six brothers and sisters, she grew up "very unsupervised" under the lax eye of governesses in the Warwickshire countryside. Her mother went dead at 25 "perhaps because of having had so many

children so fast". As a result, they were free to roam about and at times of full moon spent entire nights out of doors.

She was 17 when her parents died. Her father had left her enough money to keep herself at art school for a few years; when that ran out, she took a job helping in a commercial artist's studio, spending her evenings reading. By then she had started writing, and she found the influence of others distorted her own style. Did she stop reading so much? "Oh no, I can't stop reading."

She married very young, throwing her boxes of unfinished stories away as she left for her wedding. Her husband was an artist, a friend from days when they were both children playing on an Anglo-Saxon burial ground near her Warwickshire home. The marriage did not last. By the time she broke out she was keeping her two children by modelling, converting houses into small flats and letting them, running a garage and buying and selling old tapestries and Lacordas cars, dealing in antique furniture and pebble puppies. When war brought an end to the demand for highly bred dogs and sports cars, she took her children to the country, borrowed a typewriter to fill the lonely hours and wrote a book about her childhood called *Sisters by a River*.

Barbara Comyns has been writing ever since, first in Barcelona where she and her second husband lived for 18 years until inflation and a sinking pound forced them back to England, to the cottage of her scenery designer son, where the garden was full of hippopotamuses made of fibre glass. Four years ago they moved to a housing estate in Richmond, a sunny house with a whippet, birds in cages and many long-haired cats.

A touch of the gruesome, artlessly told, with unexpected passages of comedy, marks most of her books, all fiction except for an unpublished book on Leigh Hunt, *The Sky-Chairs* is about a small girl who broods on the presence in her home of six chairs—five black, one white—made of human skin. (As a child, Barbara Comyns was taken with a colonel who possessed such chairs, trophies from the Boer War.) Who was changed and who was dead was based on a real epidemic of ergot poisoning in France, restaged in her Warwickshire village. "It was fun remembering the characters I knew and making them mad."

The house in Richmond is neat and full of Dresden statues and half nail, half surrealist pictures of her own, a curious visual collage when she writes. She laughed when I asked if we could have a photograph of her. "One should look venerable at my age. In fact I just look like myself, only older and a bit batty."

She talks, as she writes, with a throwaway deceptively plain style, but without flippancy, choosing words with care and marking them all with a strong and always surprising individual touch.

Caroline Moorehead

*The Vet's Daughter*, by Barbara Comyns. Virago Modern Classics, £2.50.

## Afloat, with a down-to-earth girl called Alice



Barbara Comyns, mixing invention with reality.

Photograph by Bill Warrurst

## Social Focus

# The child-death cycle that could be broken

When Scott Fitzgerald described the rich as being different from the rest of us he was not wrong. The rich are healthier. In every part of the world the children of the rich are taller and heavier than their poor counterparts. As unemployment mounts and poverty returns to Britain, the social disadvantages on health will become even more apparent—and will continue to be felt well into the twenty-first century.

Social class differences in health are most obvious in obstetrics. During the 32 years of the NHS perinatal mortality (stillbirths and deaths in the first week of life) has steadily declined, but throughout that time the difference between social classes I and V has remained unchanged. It is as true today as 30 or 50 years ago that the chances of pregnancy ending in a dead baby are twice as high for a woman married to a manual worker as for the wife of a doctor, lawyer, or university teacher.

The effects of poverty on childbearing have a long depressing history, recently reviewed by Sir Dugald Baird, the distinguished emeritus professor of obstetrics at Aberdeen University.

The period from 1850 to 1873 was the golden age of Victorian prosperity. At that time Britain claimed 40 per cent of the total world trade; yet her working population lived in degrading squalor, vividly described by social reformers but ignored by successive governments. Britain compared badly with the rest of Europe. In Sir Dugald's words, "a higher proportion of children were born and reared in health than in any other country."

It was, indeed, the contrast between social attitudes in Britain and the rest of northern Europe between 1880 and 1910 that condemned our population to lag behind its neighbours in health for the

remainder of the twentieth century. In 1880 infant mortality (deaths in the first year of life) and perinatal mortality were much the same in Britain and Scandinavia. Yet from 1880 infancy and perinatal mortality fell steadily in Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands; in Britain it rose from 120 per 1,000 births in 1880 to 160 in 1900. The gap opened up at that time has remained ever since and Swedish perinatal and neonatal mortality is now about half that in Britain.

Why does poverty have such a marked effect on childbearing? With modern drugs, blood transfusions, and the whole panoply of technical advances in obstetrics, the social class of the mother might be expected to be of minor importance. Sir Dugald Baird's analysis (published in the *British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* 1080; 87:1057-67) shows that poor maternal health increases the risk of stillbirth from lack of oxygen and from maldevelopment of the infant's brain thought possibly to be due to foetal deficiency. His detailed year-by-year study shows that the numbers of these infant deaths have risen and fallen in the past 50 years. Two age groups of women had especially high rates: those born at the turn of the century and those born between 1926 and 1937—both times of great poverty. A third peak occurred with women born in the early 1950s—the daughters of the women born in the depression years.

The explanation seems to be that the health of an adult is crucially influenced by the physical quality of the environment in the first 15 years of life. Childhood experiences affect susceptibility to disease and to the hazards of pregnancy. Before birth and for the first year of life the health of a child depends on the health and vitality of the mother. No class differences in infant mortality are so large as those determined by the class differences in nutrition and other social factors in childhood.

How far can medical care reduce the

effects of poor maternal health on childbearing? That question was examined by the House of Commons Social Services Committee last year in its report on perinatal and neonatal mortality. The committee identified a cluster of socio-economic factors that contributed to perinatal mortality—lack of education, poverty, poor housing, possibly poor nutrition, unplanned pregnancy, smoking, and excess alcohol. It was also convinced, on the basis of expert advice from obstetricians, that "much of the death and handicap suffered by babies of socially disadvantaged mothers can be overcome by well applied medical intervention."

The committee estimated that proper use of modern knowledge could reduce deaths at and around birth by 35-50 per cent—a saving of 3,000 to 5,000 lives a year. Sadly, the Secretary of State for Health has refused to increase spending on the NHS obstetric services—even though the expenditure would be balanced by savings in other directions, since declining perinatal mortality is expected to reduce, too, the numbers of children born with lifelong handicaps.

Without positive intervention, Britain will inevitably continue to lag behind its Scandinavian neighbours. It is a sad commentary on national priorities that Sweden—by no means the richest country in the world—should be the first to give all its children an optimum physical environment. Since 1976 measurements of children's heights has shown no differences either between social classes or between regions. Every child grows to its full genetic potential. Here in Britain regional and class differences are still evident—and so long as they persist, the disadvantaged children will carry their disadvantages into childbearing and so on to the next generation.

Dr Tony Smith

Medical Correspondent

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The Time Special



















Why Mr Frank Chapple's attack on the electoral college may yet be vindicated

# The man who really scored at Wembley

Mr Frank Chapple, the favourite *bête noire* of the Left, made one of the few articulate and intellectually honest speeches of the day during Labour's special conference at Wembley. He was barracked but his presentation only faltered once and there the needle temporarily stuck in the groove.

As the protest mounted, the electrician's leader returned three times to his complaint that, unless the party leader was elected by the "one-man, one-vote" system, then the choice would be influenced by Communists, Fascists and Conservatives.

In the event, his appeal fell on predictably deaf ears because the block votes had already been marshalled in support of an electoral college. The only argument was over who should have the greatest say, and some unions now show every sign of embarrassment at getting more than they really wanted.

But however the power shares are apportioned, an issue of principle remains: whose finger on the political trigger? Can the choice of the leader of the Labour Party be decisively influenced by trade unionists owing allegiance to another party?

In fact, the "official" Communists are probably stronger



Mr Chapple: barracked.

now in terms of covert political clout than for many years. The economic recession has robbed the Communist Party of much of its traditional industrial field of play on the shopfloor. But its ability to exert power within the "Broad Left" of the Labour movement has grown apace.

On their own, the Communists can achieve nothing. Nowhere in top union echelons do they enjoy a majority. There are only two party members on the 40-strong TUC general council. There are just four on the 25-member executive committee of the National Union of Mineworkers; two sit on the nine-member executive of the train

drivers' union, the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (Aslef). There are about half a dozen on the Transport and General Workers Union executive and about the same number on the executive of the National Union of Railwaymen. Their numbers on the policy-making national committee of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers has diminished in recent years, and in unions like the General and Municipal Workers' and the electricians their influence is negligible.

But although their numbers are small, in the Seventies' climate of Left credibility they achieved much by working through their Labour allies. Mr Michael Costello, the Communist Party industrial organiser, was a keen lobbyist in the bars at last October's conference and defends the unions' capture of power. "No new principle affecting the basis of decision-making has been taken," he said. "The unions have always been the decisive force in the Labour Party."

"The Wembley decision simply corrects an anomalous position that had become intolerable once the Parliamentary Labour Party ceased to represent the party's policies. Communists, as members of affiliated unions, have always paid the political levy and have thus been open members of the Labour Party in the sense decided by the party's founders and enshrined in the constitution."

His disingenuous explanation

of the party line will not cut much ice with Dr David Owen and his colleagues, who fear with some justice that if the trade union votes in Labour's electoral college are to be cast by union executives, then Communists and their almost undistinguishable allies in the Labour Party will indeed play a substantial role.

Of the risk of Fascist influence little needs to be said. The National Front has had a minimal success in infiltrating some union branches particularly in the London area among railwaymen and in postal sorting offices. But they are a social problem rather than a political force.

But the position of the Conservatives is much more ambiguous. In the first place, the party's "labour" arm, has been conducting a reasonably successful campaign to persuade Tory voters who belong to unions to opt out of paying the political levy to the Labour Party. The figures speak for themselves. More than 200,000 engineering workers out of a total membership of 1.2 million do not pay the levy. In the 130,000-strong boltonian society, the figure is 51,000. In the 349,000-member builders' union, the union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians, 149,000 have opted out. And in the print union the Society of Graphical and Allied Trades (Sogat), 155,000 out of 205,000 have taken the same course.

Trade unionists who opt out

are then barred from taking part in traditional political activity such as electing delegates to the Labour Party conference to the management committees of local parties. They are obliged to remain silent when political business is conducted in the branches.

But in unions where opting out can be an uncomfortable experience (not to put too fine a point on it), Tory members who continue to pay the levy urge support for moderate leaders such as Mr Terry Duffy of the engineering workers. Where the candidates are not so well known, things are more difficult, as witnessed when Mr James Prior, then Shadow Employment Minister, voted at a meeting of his white-collar union, Apex for a candidate who did not seem to be getting much support and wasn't on a slate.

The man turned out to be a Communist. The general idea of the Conservative trade unionists is to encourage a shift away from "class warfare" and the policies of confrontation with Tory governments. It is admittedly a long-term strategy and it does not offer much by way of Tory influence on the inner workings of the Labour Party.

Millions of trade unionists will continue to vote Conservative, however, and if their political views do not permeate very far up the power structure of the Labour Party, may be felt if union leaders canvass their members' feelings before casting their electoral college votes for Labour's leader.

The practical implications of these two alternatives—poor exercised by Communists-influenced union leaders or by Tory-voting rank and file members—is neatly summed up by Mr John Bowis, until recently head of special affairs at Conservative Central Office. "The party has indeed got itself into a position where non-Labour supporters will have an influential say in the election of the Labour leader whichever system of electoral college voting they adopt."

Either the vote will be determined by caucus meetings at the top of the unions, and people like Mr Mick McGahey (the miners' Communist vice-president) and Mr Ken Gill (Communist general secretary of the engineering white-collar union TASS) will have a crucial say in their respective unions. Or, by balloting the union membership in some way, they will bring into the process people who support other parties but nevertheless still pay the political levy.

In practice, the unions are likely to behave as they have always behaved. Those with a tradition of consulting the members will pull into the electoral process many trade unionists who vote Tory or Liberal. Those that make such decisions at executive level will inevitably involve Communists and their allies. So when the dice have been cast, Mr Chapple will be seen to be right.

Paul Routledge  
Labour Editor

Bernard Levin

## Mammoth footprints seen in Piccadilly

I don't know when, or indeed whether, I have had a more depressing experience in an art gallery than that provided by the exhibition at the Royal Academy, *A New Spirit in Painting*. The title seems to me the most stupendous misnomer since the term "People's Democracies" was coined: the spirit visible on the Academy's walls is about as new as Queen Anne, the Woolly Mammoth or the political thinking of Mr Michael Foot. Hundreds and hundreds of square feet are devoted to work which is not only not new but which represents the exhausted flag-end of a tradition which was born dead and has been getting dead ever since; it is not too much to say that if you really want to know why most of the population would never dream of entering an art gallery you will find the answer roughly halfway along Piccadilly on the northern side.

There are exceptions, of course. The three Rockneys are full of light and colour, though they are below his best; a huge Matta, *Transparence du Verbe*, throbs with life-energy; R. B. Kira, in *The Orientalist*, reminds us that one of the most important functions of art used to be to show the humanity in humanity; Lucien Freud, though he certainly doesn't do that, offers a portrait, *The Big Man*, of outstanding vigour and, incidentally, draughtsmanship; there are four Picassos which, though they are sub-standard ones and anyway look as though they have wandered into the place by mistake, effectively demonstrate the difference between genius and talent, to say nothing of the difference between genius and mediocrity, let alone genius and a moderate ability at the three-card trick.

There are a few more things. Balbus deserves a second glance; you can regard Francis Bacon as a significant artist, well worth giving wall-space to, if you like, though I would be obliged if you would refrain from trying to convince me of the validity of your belief; Frank Auerbach has a certain skill; Willem de Kooning is all right if you like that sort of thing (I don't actually dislike it myself). And that is just about that.

The most striking quality about most of the rest is its lifelessness: by the end of my second tour of the exhibition, I was longing for Carl Andre to come and fold a few blankets



Two Royal Academy exhibits: Lucien Freud's Head of the Big Man and Andy Warhol's portrait of David Hockney

or pile up some bricks, or for Whistler to sue Ruskin, or for the Dadaists to burst in and smash the entire place to pieces. Nothing but a hopeless, negative, *Weltschmerz*, appropriately enough, the Germans are by far the worst, and the worst of those is Markus Lüpertz, whose work calls urgently for somebody to start the Second World War all over again. And at any rate Lüpertz is saying something, even if it is something that nobody in his right mind would want to hear; but you would hardly believe,

I think, that there are six works by Andy Warhol, that one-man demonstration of the triumph of publicity over art. Or that there are five of the silly scribbles of Cy Twombly, that there is a rectangle by Alan Charlton, seven yards wide by three high, divided horizontally into seven identical yard-wide slices, painted in an absolutely even blue-grey monochrome from end to end, which has prompted the chief ass of the three asses who have selected the exhibits to refer, in his introduction in the catalogue, to the Beckett-like loneliness of

Alan Charlton's canvases. The catalogue, apart from the contribution of the asses aforementioned (they are Christos M. Joachimides, Norman Rosenthal and Nicholas Serota, and the last of them ought to know better, being the Director of the Whitechapel Gallery), is excellent: every one of the pictures is illustrated, well over half of the reproductions being in colour, and there are ample biographical and other details, though these do not constitute an entirely unqualified blessing, as they include, in the note on a dreary Italian called Mario



Merz, a passage which I had to read twice to make sure that I had not written it myself as a parody:

Merz sought to suggest the parallel between social or economic ills and proliferation by juxtaposing such simple (even primitive) images as the 'geloo' with a neon tube moulded into the numbers of Fibonacci's numerical progression. Around 1973 he began incorporating a numerical element into the structure of the work itself. Thus, selecting a cafeteria as a typical site for human proliferation, he constructed tables that would accommodate people in groups of 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34 and 55. When this series was exhibited in the space of the Kunsthaus, Berlin the tables were used by visitors, which reveals Merz's tendency to underline his didactic intentions by encouraging a physical or spatial interaction between the viewer and the artwork.

Then there is Robert Rynan, who paints canvases plain white all over and calls them *Bridge, Division, Unit, Crest and Acme* ("Dear Marie Proops, I suffer from Acme") respectively; and there is Jean Helion, who entirely fills something like 250 square yards of paper with hundreds of more or less identical, skull-shaped ovals; there is Georg Baselitz, a painter of average Gordon Fraser Gallery Christmas-card quality whose contribution to civilisation lies not in the pictures but in the fact that he has had them hung upside down, thus inevitably leading

to the artist "not only liberated himself from the bonds of a traditional conception of painting but took up, by this affront, a position of resistance within the context of art."

Now you can disagree with any or all of these judgments of mine; they are as subjective as anybody else's. But what in the name of Giotto is new about any of this? More to the point, where is the spirit? What spirit is suggested by Dieter Haecker's picture of what seems to be one gentleman about to set fire to the hair of another? Or of Howard Hodgkin's mainly red rectangle, in which can be discerned what look like the ends of sawn firewood logs, which is entitled *The Green Chateau*? Or of Jean Helion's pleasant and colourful trivialities?

"There is one thing," murmured a fellow-sufferer, "most of the pictures are so big that you can stand at the end of the room and see them all well enough to decide that you don't want a closer look." But I did take a closer look, and came out by the same door as I went in. It may be that there aren't as many as 150 pictures, anywhere by any of the artists, and add up to a coherent statement of any interesting general tendency. But in that case, the solution would have been to wait until some such tendency made itself apparent, rather than cobble up this implausible suggestion that the new spirit in painting is only the old dead spirit exhumed in its worst, most strident, form.

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## The danger of holding trials on camera

The United States has taken an unfortunate step towards denying defendants in criminal cases the option of having what they consider to be an unprejudiced trial. A decision of the Supreme Court on Monday upheld the constitutional right of states to allow television coverage of criminal trials, even if the accused objected.

Some 21 states at present allow television access to trials, although 10 of them require the accused's consent to such coverage. Following the Supreme Court's decision, it will now be open to all states to give the go-ahead to televised reporting of trials.

The case was brought to the Supreme Court by two Miami policemen accused of burglary. At the time of the trial, Florida was conducting a one-year experiment (since made permanent) of television coverage of court proceedings. British viewers saw some of the results of that in the BBC 2 series, *Circuit II, Miami*, in 1979.

The Supreme Court failed to find any evidence that the trial of the two men had been tainted by television coverage, let alone that all television reporting of trials would be prejudicial. The decision stressed that it would always be open

to accused to appeal from a jury verdict on the grounds of prejudice caused by the presence of the cameras, or by the accounts given in broadcast news items.

Chief Justice Warren Burger, in a decision adopted by six of the eight judges (the other two agreed with the result but wrote separate opinions) said that merely to expose there was possible prejudice to a defendant in having the trial covered by television did not make that form of reporting unconstitutional. There might be similar prejudice in written reports, but they were not prohibited. On the surface, that reason-

ing does not seem unreasonable. But anyone who has seen the effect of the television cameras on the conduct of criminal trials would feel considerable unease.

In the Miami series, everyone seemed to be to the cameras, judges, lawyers on both sides, witnesses and the accused. The trials thus televised were significantly different in nature to what they would have been had they been reported in the printed word.

The news bulletins shown every day of a trial's highlights would have had far greater impact than radio or newspaper summaries of the same proceed-

ings. In short, the trials were distorted by the presence of television, and by the knowledge that excerpts were going to be shown state-wide, or even, in the case, was spectacular enough nationally.

All this could be justified if the accused were themselves happy about having their trials televised. What the Supreme Court has done is to allow the state authorities to impose television coverage over the objections of protesting accused. That cannot be good for the reputation of American justice.

Marcel Berlins  
Legal Correspondent

## LONDON DIARY

### Hard labour for short sharp sentences

You know how it is there early in the morning in Hampstead with the bus still asleep against the trees of the Heath; before even the dustcarts come by with plastic sacks for the durbins? Well, we came up from Camden Town and we heard it. All around. The automatic fire.

"Remingtons," Harry said, pretty mean. And Imperials and an Adler portable. And an IBM golfball with electric carriage return."

Harry knew. He had been trying for a year to make it with a broad from the council typing pool.

The winter sun climbed in the sky, diffused and milky like old men's eyes. Typewriters clicked with menace from every window. We took cover in the cafe.

They were waiting for us, just like they said. Two of them. We sat down and one of them came over.

"What gives?" said Harry. "We face the white bulb that is paper with no words on it," said the big one.

Harry sprang to his feet and smashed the big guy's jaw. "Speak English," he snarled. The big guy slumped in a corner, real heavy. "It's the Fourth International Imitation Hemingway Competition," he said. He spat out two teeth. Seek inspiration. The words will come quick, clean and true."

Harry punched him in the stomach. "More," he said. "The facts."

"They will pick the winner from those who have followed the rules: a one-page parody of Hemingway." The big guy wiped blood.

"And you have to mention Harry's Bar. Nice. Harry will fly the winner to his bar in Los Angeles. For dinner. For two."

"Some will be funny. All will be judged. His son Jack Hemingway will preside. Ray Bradbury will help. There will be dialogue, character sketches, action scenes. Harry will keep them all."

"Time passes, my friend. The Big Ring closes on February 15. The judges wait. Let me return to my keyboard."

They left. We left. Harry knew a place. We went in. Harry ordered up two Spanish absinthes. He spent a long time staring into the bright liquid

winking in his glass, catching the reflection of the MacDonald's hamburger sign. At last he spoke.

"They're certainly doing it in earnest up here," he said.

There is good news for those who agree with Kipling that a woman is no match for a good cigar. Derek Harris, chairman of one of our leading Havana cigar importers who has just returned from the Caribbean, reports that the Cubans have finally defeated the blue mould fungus which decimated their last two tobacco harvests. Thanks to finding an effective herbicide, they are about to harvest one of the best crops for many years.

Good Havanas have been in short supply recently, although the Cubans have been doing their best to keep up supplies to Britain, one of their most prized markets.

The fruits of this year's bumper crop should be in British shops next year, but there is a catch. The cost to Cuba of eradicating the pest has meant that cigar prices will rise by about 12 per cent almost immediately, and there is the additional threat that the Chancellor will impose a sub-

stantial increase in tobacco duty in the March budget. Still, I don't suppose Lord Grade will be reduced to Woodbines.

### Waning

In an opinion poll announced yesterday, Mrs Thatcher notched up second place ahead of Ayatollah Khomeini and Idi Amin, but failed to snatch the lead from Adolf Hitler.

However the Prime Minister need not lose too much sleep over the results, astonishing though they may be; they are merely the outcome of the latest annual survey by Madame Tussaud's in London to discover who are the most feared and hated figures in the world's works. The Ayatollah, who was last year's clear winner, has been toppled to fourth place.

While elevating Hitler to a pinnacle of nastiness, the voters deserted Churchill, last year's number one "hero of all time", replacing him with Supremacy.

The late John Lennon has displaced Bjorn Borg, who nevertheless remains the favourite sportsman. No one, no matter how elevated, is safe from the vagaries of the Tussaud voters. Even the Queen has been knocked from her perch in fifth place by

Larry Hagman, the horrid citizen of Dallas. Fame sure is a fleeting thing.

### Facade lift

One of the earliest indications that the Prime Minister and the lately deposed Leader of the Commons did not see eye to eye on every conceivable subject occurred more than a year ago when Norman gave qualified but unmistakable approval to a new scheme for offices for his fellow MPs. The building, designed by Sir Hugh Casson, would have cost an estimated £120m, and within hours an indignant Mrs Thatcher declared that the nation could not possibly afford such luxury.

But that being so, what now happens to the buildings on the site, in Bridge Street, which will stay where they are for the foreseeable future? Although one of them, St Stephen's House, was recently taken over for use by Parliamentary staff serving the new Commons select committees, the remainder are either empty or let on short leases. The freehold is owned by the Crown, but the idea that they might be converted quite cheaply to serve the needs of

our overcrowded legislators appears not to have been considered.

Moreover, the facades are shabby and dirty and can hardly do much to impress the millions of tourists who visit

the area every year. If Michael Heseltine, the Environment Secretary, is as keen on conservation and renovation as he professes, could he not persuade his Property Services Agency to get busy with scrubbing brushes and a few pots of paint?

Booked out

Public spending cuts appear to be playing havoc with our public libraries. On the few occasions that I go to my local library and find it open, I also find the assistants few and the shelves depleted. Is this, I wonder, a case for the return of private enterprise?

Before the days of universal free reading you could pay a visit to the profusion of little libraries tucked away in corners of W. H. Smith and Boots the Chemists, and pick up the books of Carland with your bottle of aspirin. Indeed some readers would say that the two go together.

But the Public Library Act of 1964 put an end to much of that. The subscription libraries in the chain stores, which had specialised in romantic fiction since the beginning of the century, gradually disappeared as public libraries improved.

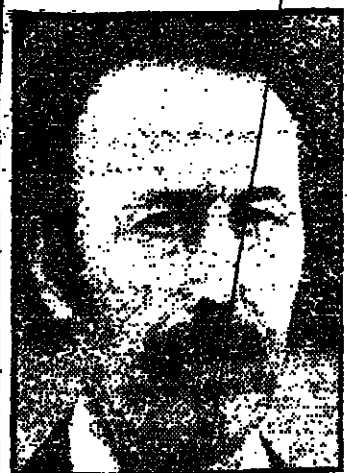
A mere handful of subscription libraries have survived. The Leeds Library, founded in 1768, with its maximum of 500 members paying £12 each a year, retains a Victorian atmosphere. Harrods has a lending library for 3,000 members paying up to £45 each a year. The splendid London Library has one million volumes and 6,500 members.

But these are mere oases in a desert of illiteracy. The Bradford Library and Literary Society closed its doors for the last time on December 11 after surviving for more than 200 years.

Under the Thatcher doctrine of self-help, perhaps the rebirth of the subscription library is already overdue.

Introducing the New Standard drama awards yesterday, Ned Sherrin managed a double-barrelled jibe at both recent political events and the National Theatre's controversial play *The Romans in Britain*. Quoth Sherrin: "Not eligible for the best comedy is *Labour Party*, which this year did for the Romans as for the Druids."

Alan Hamilton



The late President Boumedienne—Utopian hope; and President Chadli—time for concessions.

## Algeria gains from facing up to reality

Two great clenched fists ripping apart the frail chain which has sought to juggle the symbol of Algeria. The hands are carved on the face of the bulky sadstone monument which rises impressively out of the gardens running down the centre of the Boulevard Khamis in the heart of modern Algiers.

They epitomize to Algerians the birth or rebirth of their nation and inspire their country's foreign policy. It is a foreign policy which has frequently brought Western incomprehension and even derision in the past. It is a foreign policy which today has the very solid achievement of its credit having enabled the release of the American hostages held by Iran.

It was Algerian understanding of how the hostages must have yearned for freedom and Algerian understanding of the motivation behind the Islamic revolution in Iran which made the country possibly the only one in the world emotionally fitted to act as intermediary between two diametrically opposed nations.

The eighty-year-long bloody war of independence—which the average Frenchman still remembers as a series of atrocities—was for the Algerians an heroic struggle against a hated foreign invader.

Since independence in 1962, Algeria has been short of problems, particularly economic ones, but there is little or no nostalgia among the people for the days of the colonial past. Rather there is an on-going pride and joy in being independent.

The result of that is that from the earliest days of nationhood Algeria made it a policy to give uncompromising support to all liberation movements. It was a support which cost the new nation dearly in esteem, especially when so much Western opinion was still shocked by the violence which had surrounded independence.

Algeria's reputation as a supporter of dissidents made it the inevitable and favourite airport destination for many hijackers. The reputation became somewhat grotesque, perhaps, as Algeria more and more spoke out for some of the more outlandish independence movements.

Since these independence movements tended to be largely against what the Algerians identified as "western colonial imperialism" a growing interest in the country developed in the Soviet bloc, which began to woo the regime of President Boumedienne. The wooing has gone on and has been largely with guns and other weaponry.

At the same time trade with the Soviet bloc remained, and still remains, at only a tiny level. The main trading partner of Algeria was the United States, with the EEC countries jointly running a good second. Despite its professed socialist tendencies, Algeria has always known where it can best get the capital it needs to achieve the economic independence it is still trying to achieve.

As yet, Algeria is not really independent. It has an external debt estimated at some \$20,000m, against which its only developed asset is its large natural gas and oil reserves. Between them they contribute 96 per cent of all Algerian earnings from the world. If the country is to develop fast enough to keep up

with its rapidly expanding population it will have to diversify.

This is why, since 1973, Algeria has taken the lead in pressure from the Third World countries to set up what it terms "a new international order" to change the relationship between the poor and the rich nations.

To President Boumedienne this "new order" was an attainable Utopia. Since his death two years ago a new spirit of realism has crept in. President Chadli still champions the cause of the new order but pending its establishment he has given clear indications that Algeria is prepared to make concessions to the existing order.

Relations with the United States have been steadily improved, not least because renegotiations of the contract for selling gas to the United States are dragging on. Late last year the United States frigate *Edward McDonnell* paid a goodwill visit to Oran and was given a splendid welcome. Prompt and generous American aid following the El Asnam earthquake have been much appreciated by the whole population.

The Queen's visit to the country last year was also a great success, and her visit in the earthquake area was wide praise. The climate is right for a British trade initiative.

This is even more the case because French influence is tangibly receding, albeit very slowly.

At the same time, President Chadli has shown himself amenable to overtures from France for a more friendly relationship, as he has to neighbouring Tunisia and Morocco. Indeed the threat of open war with Morocco over the Western Sahara which was always present in the days of Boumedienne, has receded.

There are signs, too, that the Soviet block is less welcome than it used to be. Behind this lies the selfsame spirit of independence, which dominates the national character.

Algeria has made its displeasure about the invasion of Afghanistan known to the Soviet powers. In this it has remained true to its vocation of champion of liberation causes. Algeria has so often in the past been the chosen meeting place for settling disputes. It must be one of the only cities in the world with both a boulevard Che Guevara and an Avenue Franklin Roosevelt.

The huge, modern El Aurassi Hotel, which dominates part of the city skyline, has seen peace signed between Portuguese and Angolan rebels, between the Polisario and Mauritania, between the Shah and Iraq. The country had a tradition of acting as host to settlements for some time before the hostages were taken prisoner. Some officials talk optimistically now of being able to mediate in the present war between Iran and Iraq.

What the hostage negotiations have done, however, is make the world at large believe in Algeria's ability to referee. "We did this for humanitarian reasons," an official explained after the hostage agreement was read out in the Aurassi. "All we want in return is a little respect."

Ian Murray

Perhaps Foot only wants David Owen to stay in the Party as he's a doctor...

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## IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN WORSE

The recession is slowing down, but it is not over yet. That is the clear picture which emerges from the latest set of unemployment figures and the report on the economic situation from the Confederation of British Industry. Hopes of an upturn during the current year remain distinctly fragile.

The unemployment figures are slightly less bad than might have been feared. There is a five week period before the January count of the number of unemployed. The increase in the underlying level of unemployment during that period was 103,000, little more than during the previous four weeks. The figures contain other slight straws of hope for the Government, all of which point to the conclusion that the increase in unemployment is certainly not accelerating and may even be slowing down.

Such a conclusion would be consistent with the evidence which is beginning to emerge on the pattern of output at the end of last year. It now looks likely that the drop in national output which occurred so precipitately during the summer may have eased off at the end of the year. The CBI survey of business opinion suggests that the run-down of stocks which played

such a key role in this may now be past its worst. It is not safe to conclude from this, however, that output has now reached bottom and that it will start to pick up from now on. De-stocking is slowing down, but it is not yet over. The economy is having to make a painful adjustment to a lower level of output overall.

It makes little sense for anyone, least of all the Government, to become obsessed by the detail of just when the absolute bottom in output will be reached and when the upturn will start. Such forecasts are exceedingly difficult to get right and of little practical consequence.

What is clear is that at some point during the current year output will stabilize. It may then rise, but only gently. The increase in unemployment which has been such a feature of the past year will slow down quite markedly, although—given past performance in productivity—the total output of work must be expected to go on rising for the foreseeable future.

These are the bad sides of the economic situation. The good side is that inflation is definitely falling faster than even the Government is yet willing to recognize. It now seems probable that at some point during the

current year inflation will fall well into single figures. The underlying rate over the past six months, traditionally the best guide to trends, has already dropped to that level.

The decline in the rate of inflation is not solely the result of sterling's continued strength. Domestic costs, particularly wages, are beginning to respond to the new climate. The Government can thus reasonably hope that it is in sight of achieving a sustained fall in inflation as long as its current policies are pursued. The problem is that a continuation of a tight policy makes it relatively unlikely that there will be the sort of growth in output and living standards which governments traditionally feel they need in the years before an election.

In addition, this approach imposes severe structural strains on the economy. The manufacturing sector of industry has already been exposed to severe competition from abroad. This will worsen as long as sterling remains strong. In this situation, the Chancellor should be giving urgent attention to the need to be changing the balance of the economy so that sections such as manufacturing bear less of the burden.

## COALITION TREMORS IN BONN

Three months after its clear election victory, West Germany's coalition government has still not got into its stride. The election was a vote of confidence in the coalition formula, the alliance between the Social Democrats (SPD) and the Free Democrats (FDP), and in the leadership of Herr Schmidt, the Chancellor. But it altered the balance within the coalition by significantly increasing the number of votes that went to the FDP, while only giving the SPD a marginal increase. Consequently the FDP claimed, and has received, greater influence on government policy; but that in its turn has caused resentment on the left wing of the SPD, which is itself larger in the new Bundestag. So instead of a sense of a renewal and of new horizons, there has been a feeling of malaise in Bonn for the past few months, the latest sign of which was this week's abortive attempt by the left wing of the SPD to have the defence budget reduced by 1,000 million Marks.

It is not the first time that a new German government has had initial difficulties of this sort. Four years ago, at the beginning of the last legislature, the two coalition partners had some trouble in resolving their differences; but by the end they were working well together.

This time, however, the situation is more tense than before, and there have been suggestions that the coalition might fall apart, with the FDP either forming an alliance with the Christian Democrats or going into opposition and leaving the two large parties to form a grand coalition. For the time being either of these developments seems most unlikely. The FDP has done extremely well out of its alliance with the Social Democrats—it was seen by its supporters in the election as serving as a moderate brake on leftist tendencies in the SPD—and it could jeopardize its gains by changing its tactics. Its leaders have shown no sign of wanting to get out.

The question is whether Herr Schmidt and Herr Genscher, the FDP leader, can pull the coalition together and get it working more smoothly. One of the main immediate challenges is the situation in West Berlin, where the two parties are in coalition and where the previous Mayor, Herr Dietrich Stobbe, was recently forced to resign because of a financial scandal. Berlin, the former capital, has a special significance for Germans, and it was felt to be extremely important for the coalition not to lose power there. So Dr Hans Jochen Vogel, formerly Minister of Justice in Bonn and seen as Herr Schmidt's own chosen successor,

has been installed as Mayor; and the hope is that he will be able to hold the city for the coalition in the forthcoming elections in spite of a strong challenge from the Christian Democrats.

West Germany's allies are bound to wonder whether the coalition's difficulties are likely to affect foreign policy, and particularly the decision to install the new medium-range nuclear missiles in Germany, in view of the campaign against them by the SPD left wing. There is no reason to think that they will. Herr Schmidt is firmly committed to a policy of matching Soviet weapons, if only as a basis for disarmament negotiations, and he has great experience in dealing with his own left wing. More to the point is the question whether, with President Reagan now in office in Washington, German-American relations can be raised from the low level to which they sank during the Carter administration. The Germans are strongly committed to a policy of improved relations with Eastern Europe, and they are apprehensive that a more militant policy from Washington might jeopardize that. But there is no reason to fear that they are about to become doubtful members of the alliance, and the new American Administration will secure their cooperation more easily if they recognize this.

## TIME FOR THE TIN POUND

It is well that Sir Geoffrey Howe has brought the desultory old argument about whether we need a one-pound coin to an end at last; otherwise the inevitably ensuing argument about whether the Royal Mint should continue to weigh our pockets down with coins of such small value might have trodden too close on its heels. Already the pound sterling buys only half as much as the fifty-pence piece originally did in 1969; by 1983, when the proposed coin is to be issued, its purchasing power (assuming a 20 per cent inflation rate, perhaps unfairly) may be about the same as that of a two-shilling piece twenty years ago. What we should be talking about is not the tin pound but the tin fiver.

Of course we already have a one-pound coin exempt from these humiliating fluctuations. The gold sovereign, still struck today, is already worth more than 50 times its nominal value; opinions differ over whether this uniquely qualifies or disqualifies

it as a basis for a monetary system. Changes in value are not straightforward in any case. Rawdon Crawley, visiting his son's school in the 1820s in Vanity Fair, sagaciously tipped Master Blackball a sovereign to win his goodwill towards the younger boy. Rawdon was seldom flush with cash, but free with it when he had it. Jos Sedley was quite the reverse, yet even he, some 20 years earlier, had handed over half a guinea to the schoolboy George Osborne, although the latter had just ruined Jos's Hessian boots. Even in those days, such gifts must have been convertible into astronomical numbers of cream buns; probably the equivalent of several weeks' pay for a labourer. Any comparison with the tariff at a present-day comprehensive is unreal: not even Master Blackball's sovereign could buy him a turn at Space Invaders.

It would be tempting to propose that the new coin should bring back into everyday circulation the splendid Regency

image of St George and the dragon which Pistrucchi designed in 1816 (the model for St George was an Italian servant at a hotel in Leicester Square; it is not recorded who sat for the dragon). The fifty-pence piece successfully revived Britannia in this way. But if, as proposed, the new coin is to be of the same diameter as the sovereign and yellow in colour, it is important that there should be no possibility of its being passed off as a redesigned version of the gold coin.

The two new additions to the coinage will give a depressingly ad hoc air to the range, with no less than four distinct species of coin, brown, white and yellow, disc and oblate heptagons. The first government that really conquers inflation should mark its triumph with a comprehensive redesign of the coinage. In view of the execrably insipid design of the reverses of almost every British coin in the last fifty years, fresh images could hardly fail to be an improvement.

## Criminal procedure moves

From Sir David Napley  
Sir, The Philips commission on criminal procedure suggests that in place of committal for trial there be substituted an application for discharge. A majority (the ratio is not revealed) doubted on such an application "whether the magistrates need to take their decision upon the basis of oral evidence tested under cross-examination". It is hoped that neither the suggestion nor the convoluted reasoning on which it is based will be accepted.

"Magistrates", they rightly observe, "are reluctant to dismiss cases and over 2,000 or just over 2 per cent of those committed for trial are discharged in the crown court" for insufficient evidence. That figure is probably low, but means, if the average cost of a case for both sides is £750, a loss of public or private money of £1,500,000 every year, if each case lasts approximately half to a full day, wastage of four to eight years' court time, whilst congestion in some crown courts is still a matter of concern. Add that "ordered and directed acquittals in the crown court for insufficient evidence in 1978 were over 40 per cent nationally and as high as 54 per cent in one area", and it argues not for weakening, but strengthening the sifting process.

The commission rightly regrets the lack of effective scrutiny of the case by the prosecution and the defence and the failure of prosecution

witnesses "to give evidence in a satisfactory manner". They might have added that over many years the attitude of the lay magistracy to commitments has been half-hearted, dispiriting and mere routine.

It is inconsistent to assert: "so far as possible no one should be required to stand trial in the absence of good cause" whilst believing that this principle can be protected by reference alone to written statements prepared by the police. They are often unreliable, and frequently contain as positive statements of fact no more than rationalizations between the intended witness and the police officer of what the witness is assisted to recall; the unreliability of the statement can be demonstrated only by cross-examination.

Often, other facts absent from the statement can only be elicited by cross-examination, throwing a wholly different complexion on the statement, or enabling further investigation to be made in the limited time available to the defence. There are also other important aspects too lengthy to mention.

A meaningful examination of the quality of the evidence when tested by cross-examination, and committal proceedings, competently conducted, are often vital to the outcome of the ultimate trial.

Finally, committal proceedings should only be heard by those who are robust, experienced and knowledgeable enough to recognize those cases which should and should not be sent for trial. If that is achieved they should be left as they are. Yours truly, DAVID NAPLEY, Kingsley, Napley and Company, 107-115 Long Acre, WC2, January 20.

## The cost of dying

From Mrs Elisabeth Goodwin  
Sir, I recently helped a friend make funeral arrangements for a deceased relative and was horrified to learn that the cost of the cheapest coffin (not the funeral!) was £286. As my friend's relative was to be cremated, presumably the coffin also would be cremated?

As I approach my three score years and ten, would it not be a good investment to buy my coffin now. Yours faithfully, ELISABETH GOODWIN, Flar 3, Thelton Crossbush, Arundel, West Sussex, January 22.

## Criminal attempts at the impossible

From Professor J. A. Andrews and others

Sir, When opening the debate on the Criminal Attempts Bill (Report, January 20), the Home Secretary expressed the belief that it would clarify the law, but in this he has, unfortunately, been misadvised. The issue relates to impossible attempts. At present it is a crime to attempt or conspire to commit a crime, with one major exception: Posh, who try or plan to commit crimes are not guilty of attempt or conspiracy if it turns out that, owing to a mistake of fact on their part, the crime is impossible of commission. So (it seems) the following are untouched by the law: a person who tries to steal from a handbag that turns out to be empty; one who shoots through a skylight at what he thinks is a policeman when there is no one on the roof; a terrorist who, thinking that he is acquiring explosives, is given a substance that will not explode because of the lack of an essential ingredient; men who set up a plant for extracting cocaine illegally from a substance that turns out to have no cocaine in it.

After prolonged study of the subject the Law Commission proposed that this limitation on the law should be abolished. A person whose criminal plan fails because of his mistake of fact should be liable for conviction (though, of course, he would not be guilty if what he was aiming to do was not a crime at all but only an imaginary crime). The would be criminal is morally as guilty as if the crime he had in view were possible of commission.

It is true that some attempts are not worth prosecuting but, on any formulation, the law of attempt and conspiracy will include some trivial cases and it is impossible also to draw a line between those cases which are merely because they are pretty harmless. The police do not prosecute attempts except in matters of gravity, and would be unlikely to bring charges where an attempt

is laughably inept. The Law Commission's well-drafted proposal therefore met with approval by all those who wrote upon it in the legal journals.

Almost inexplicably, the Bill now presented by the Government substantially modifies it. The Bill is vague and self-contradictory, so that if it is passed as it stands its effect will not be settled until after a number of expensive appeals. However, it appears from Home Office statements that the Department's intention is that the pickpocket and marksman should be convicted, but that the cocaine manufacturer and terrorist and various other people should be exempt.

We are professors of law who naturally wish the law to be clear, rational and effective. We think that the present Bill fails in the first two respects and quite possibly in the third. It falls short of minimum standards of clarity. Further, we think that it will not have the effect intended by the Home Office unless its provisions are read in a logically unsatisfactory way. In any case we much prefer both: the policy and the drafting of the Law Commission's proposal.

We hope that the present provisions will be amended, preferably on the Government's initiative, to bring them back to the Law Commission's proposals.

Yours faithfully, J. A. ANDREWS, University of Wales, D. W. ELLIOTT, University of Newcastle, EDWARD GREW, University of Leicester, BRIAN HOGAN, University of Leeds, SIDNEY PREVEZER, University of Sussex, J. C. SMITH, University of Nottingham, DONALD THOMPSON, University of Keele, GLANVILLE WILLIAMS, University of Cambridge, Jesus College, Cambridge.

## Serving democracy

From Lady Bridges

Sir, While not disagreeing with Mr John Silkin (Whitehall brief, January 20) that the Civil Service is "by its nature slow to act" (perhaps whether it is always a bad thing may be debatable), I must beg to differ from his view that the "battle" would be between "politicians who are democratically elected and the civil servants who are not".

The process by which political candidates are elected can be and sometimes is marred by practices which are far from being democratic; while our anachronistic electoral system produces results that distort rather than reflect the will of the majority.

Civil servants are not, of course, elected; but I hope Mr Silkin would agree that their appointment at all levels is as open and fair as any in the world, and that there are plenty of watchdogs ready to bark at any alleged discrimination or failure of integrity. The selection of its most senior officers is inevitably more subjective, but there are enough checks and balances, including the preferences of min-

isters and the periodic swing of the political pendulum, to ensure the representation in its higher ranks of a wide range of views stopping short of those that are either anarchic or totalitarian. The Civil Service is a former civil servant, the wife of one and daughter of another whose greatest pride was his contribution to the introduction of the Lloyd George Insurance Act, I know for a fact that whatever its imperfections, the Civil Service contains many men and women pledged to carry forward new ideas, and to subject them to careful constructive scrutiny.

Democracy is a much abused word today. To those with no special axe to grind it means, amongst other things, that Government should reflect the highest common factor in the opinions and aspirations of us, the people. I suggest that judged by this standard rather than solely by selection through the counting of votes, the Civil Service would be found to be at least as "democratic" as are its political masters.

Yours sincerely, RACHEL BRIDGES, Flar 5, 15 Draycott Place, SW3.

## Steps to aid Zimbabwe

From the Chairman of the Wellcome Foundation

Sir, The letter from Sir Martin Le Quesne (January 19) advocates certain very important steps which we within this group have already implemented without the use of enormous resources, but will nevertheless be of great long-term benefit to Zimbabwe.

Our group has a wholly owned subsidiary which is increasingly involved in the veterinary industry in Zimbabwe and was therefore well aware that the war brought about not merely a contraction in the cattle population from five million to four million, but also a drastic reduction of dipping tanks in rural areas. Tick control, vital to the health of cattle, was virtually lost. As soon as conditions allowed our company there, Cooper (Zimbabwe) Limited, instituted in the rural areas a training programme for small farmers in conjunction with the African Development Fund whereby groups of farmers are brought together and retrained by our staff in dipping techniques. Further, 1980 was the twenty-first year of our group's original busi-

ness and as one of the ways of commemorating the 20th anniversary in Zimbabwe 19 bursaries, including medicine, veterinary science, agriculture and nursing. The only criteria we suggested for candidates for these bursaries were office experience, academic achievement, leadership qualities and need. We have undertaken to award these bursaries annually for the next 20 years and hopefully they will therefore make available nearly 200 middle management trained personnel.

The essence of what we did had absolutely no strings attached: selection of candidates for the bursaries and the subsequent monitoring of progress will be made by the authorized colleges and places of learning.

There is no doubt as to the need for such Sir Martin writes and from our experience, there is no doubt that, if help is given, it is greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully, A. J. SHEPPERD, Chairman, The Wellcome Foundation Ltd, The Wellcome Building, 183 Euston Road, NW1, January 23.

## Labour's future

From Mr P. M. Williams

Sir, Very likely before long some "social democrats" will be outside the Labour Party and others in. Such situations have in the past usually led to bitter recriminations between those who go and those who stay, damaging the reputation of both, and weakening the influence of both. Already these are beginning. Yet the two groups agree with one another far more than they differ. They have far more in common with one another than with the associates they will evoke or acquire. They will retain—already evoking—the same symbolic figures: Hugh Gaitskell and Anthony Crosland (I write as the biographer of one and a lifelong friend of the other).

Both groups need to remember how many good causes they still both favour; to realize how badly those causes need their combined support; to resist the temptation to justify their own decisions by vilifying those of the others; to keep open lines of communication in the present and prospects of cooperation in the future. Both will face a new situation in one year, or two, or three, as the worst fears that they share come to be fulfilled or dispelled.

Each will be under pressure meanwhile to concentrate its fire on the other. The more that either group succumbs to that pressure, the more their common enemies will benefit.

Yours faithfully, PHILIP WILLIAMS, Nuffield College, Oxford, January 26.

From Professor Lord Stamp  
Sir, There must be many who, while not subscribing to the political views of a social democratic party

if it were to be formed, nevertheless believe that in our democratic society it would be a vitally important part to play in meeting the challenge of fundamentally undemocratic extremism, and that in meeting this threat all other political considerations pale into relative insignificance.

If such a party is to be formed with any chance of success it will require the promise of the widest possible financial support from all such people. In alliance with the Liberal Party it might then bring about that change in the electoral system which alone can banish the threat of extremist totalitarian government for ever.

I remain, Sir, an independent peer and also your obedient servant, STAMP, House of Lords, January 24.

From Mr Russell Johnston, MP for Inverness (Liberal)

Sir, The weekend's events, plus the very lucid interview of Mr Michael Foot by Mr Brian Walden on television, had the great merit of bringing sharply into focus the major issues about which the social democrats in the Labour Party are in disagreement with the Labour Party's official policy, as determined in conference and confirmed by its new leader on behalf of its parliamentary party.

Apart from Constitutional matters these are the mixed economy, our future in or out of Europe and collective defence (or multilateralism versus unilateralism).

Could someone please tell me what they disagree with the Liberal Party about? Yours faithfully, RUSSELL JOHNSTON, House of Commons, January 26.

## Misgivings on Nationality Bill

From the General Secretary of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants

Sir, I was in India when the British Nationality Bill was published. There are a number of white citizens of the United Kingdom and colonies resident in India; they will become British citizens if the Bill is passed. There are also a number of citizens of the United Kingdom and colonies of Indian descent in India, mostly people born or registered as such in East and Central Africa, and holding no other nationality: they will almost all become British overseas citizens. Some 5,000 of them have applied for special vouchers to settle in Britain: they are having to wait for nearly five and a half years before being issued with vouchers, and the Home Office Minister, Mr Timothy Raison, in a letter to Lord Avebury written since the Bill was published, has effectively confirmed that it is the Government's intention to allow that waiting period to continue to grow.

I talked over the last three weeks to hundreds of those in India who are thus excluded and who will become British overseas citizens. The Government wishes them to believe that the intended change in their nationality status will make little difference to them, because the special voucher scheme will continue. I dutifully passed on this assurance, but it is not easy for them to believe that the Government is going to great trouble to change their nationality status, and yet this will not affect them. It is easier for them to perceive the motive behind passing legislation to remove their right to pass any form of British citizenship to their children, even if those children are as a result born stateless.

Statelessness will not arise in India because any child born in India is an Indian citizen by birth, yet the Government is seeking to ensure that children born to British citizens temporarily resident in India are born only as Indian citizens, at the same time as it seeks in the Bill to prevent children born to Indian citizens and others temporarily resident in Britain from being born as British citizens.

It is therefore not surprising that the Indian press sees racism in the British Nationality Bill, as you report (January 20). It is not surprising that those who will become British overseas citizens feel indignant and insecure, as I found. And it is, I think, surprising that Britain's international reputation is being seriously damaged, in India and no doubt elsewhere, by racist nationality legislation being based upon racially discriminatory changes in the immigration rules.

It is only surprising that the Home Office has not itself understood. I recommend a visit to India to those Home Office ministers and officials who, you report (January 22), are "angry at what they regard as unjustified criticism". They could then do what the Government has made no attempt whatever to do: explain its proposals to those for whom its third-class citizenship is intended.

Yours faithfully, IAN MARTIN, General Secretary, Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, 44 Theobalds Road, WC1, January 23.

## The RAF way

From Mr Tom Freer

Sir, The letter from your correspondent Mr P. C. Barthropp (January 24), dated the Royal Air Force less than a week ago, was one of the returning prisoners of war who were "packed 27 strong in Lancasters and flown from Brussels to an airfield near Aylesbury", but my recollection of it is not the same as his.

Having been accustomed to the many "longueurs" of transit camps, etc., during my previous five years of service, I was impressed that this journey was organized for us with admirable speed, precision and consideration: and it was accomplished against a background of almost total European confusion, this being the last week of the war before VE day.

The time taken from our discovery by a British armoured patrol on a German farm near Lubek to our being at home with our families was only four days, which makes the return journey of the United States hostages seem slow indeed.

I remember no delousing, and the shortage of telephones was skillfully circumvented by assigning to each of us, as we walked away from the Lancaster, a girl from the WAAF to take down and post our telegrams. The "slow train" to Cosford took no more than a few hours, and our stay there was no longer than the minimum for fitting us out with clean clothes, ration books and a railway warrant home. Mr Barthropp implies that, compared with the returning United States hostages our treatment was tough: I found it to be touchingly simple, expeditious and direct. Yours faithfully, TOM FREER, 1 Parkside Avenue, Wimbeldon Common, SW19, January 24.

From Mr J. C. W. Bushell

Sir, It is certainly true, as Mr Barthropp says (January 24), that the circumstances in which RAF prisoners of war were returned to the United Kingdom in 1945 were less than heroic. Perhaps one trouble was that at that time no RAF doctor mentioned to us, as the State Department Medical Director is reported as applying to the hostages, the danger of the "post-traumatic stress syndrome". Still, all is not lost: Should the Ministry of Defence finally decide to refund our POW pay deductions (on account of facilities allegedly provided by our Luftwaffe hosts), that in itself should be a traumatic experience to test those of us, who survive.

Yours faithfully, J. C. W. BUSHELL, 19 Bradbourne Street, SW6, January 25.

## English Leyland

From Mr G. M. Smiles

Sir, Your report of January 14 may perhaps have misled people into believing that the industrial tribunal at Leeds gave an authoritative ruling that British Leyland was guilty of indirect racial discrimination because of the way in which it insisted that people applying for labouring jobs filled in their application forms.

May I make it clear that BL before the hearing had conceded that what had happened constituted this kind of discrimination? The tribunal therefore never considered this particular issue and the order declaring discrimination was made by consent. Yours faithfully, GEORGE SMILES, Regional Chairman, Regional Office of the Industrial Tribunals, Minerva House, 29 East Parade, Leeds.

## Case for economy?

From Mr C. J. Wise

Sir, Members of Parliament must be thoroughly ill-informed. Mr Philip Holland (January 19) writes that the Department of Employment has over 22,000 civil servants employed in public relations and the issue of work permits.

He is obviously unaware that the majority are, in fact, working very hard in hundreds of local unemployment benefit offices serving "clients": his government has helped to produce. There may be a case for transferring this work to the Department of Health and Social Security and thus Mr Holland's argument would again hold water.

However, it would become an MP to get his facts right before grandly dismissing an entire government department.

Yours faithfully, C. J. WISE, 72 Farborough, Netherfield, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, January 19.

## Voice from the past

From the Reverend J. M. C. Yates  
Sir, Perhaps one more British story? One morning at Mons we were doing rifle drill by numbers—1, 2, 3, 1—and my luckless neighbour, concentrating on the movements rather than the counting aloud, was doubled off to the guardroom for "idle shouting on parade". Yours faithfully, JOHN YATES, The Rectory, Mells, Frome, Somerset, January 19.





## COURT CIRCULAR

### CLARENCE HOUSE

January 27: The Lady Jean Rankin has succeeded Mrs Patrick Campbell-Preston as Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.

### THATCHED HOUSE LODGE

January 27: Princess Alexandra and the Hon Angus Ogilvy attended the luncheon held for the presentation of The New Standard Awards for 1980 at the Savoy Hotel.

This evening Her Royal Highness and the Hon Angus Ogilvy were present at a Reception and Buffet Supper given by The Chief Rabbi and Mrs Immanuel Jakobovits at 85, Hamilton Terrace, London, on behalf of the Jewish Society for the Mentally Handicapped.

The Lady Mary Fitzalan-Howard was in attendance.

The Duke of Edinburgh will lunch with members of the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce at Robinson College, Cambridge, on February 10.

The Duke of Edinburgh, as Chancellor of Salford University, will visit the university and attend the annual court meeting on February 13.

The Duke of Edinburgh will address the all-party Conservation Committee of both Houses of Parliament on February 18.

The Prince of Wales, Colonel-in-Chief, The Royal Regiment of Wales, will receive the regiment of Swansea on behalf of the regiment on February 20.

A service of thanksgiving for the life of Mr Murray Macdonald will be held at noon on Thursday, February 5, at St Paul's Church, Bedford Street, WC2.

### Prizes for organists

The Royal College of Organists has awarded the following prizes of a scholarship:

Saxony and Durand prizes, C. Bunt; Lord and Durand prizes, C. Bunt; Saxony and Durand prizes, C. Bunt; Saxony and Durand prizes, C. Bunt; Saxony and Durand prizes, C. Bunt.

### Latest appointments

Latest appointments include Lieutenant-General Sir John Stainer to be Commander-in-Chief United Kingdom Land Forces in April, to succeed Lord Gort; Sir Timothy Creasey, who is to retire.

Dr Graham Zelikoff, Reader in Law at London University (Queen Mary College), to be editor of Public Law in succession to Professor J. A. G. Griffith.

## Forthcoming marriages

Mr E. R. G. Clarke and Miss S. L. Ellis. The engagement is announced between Graham, elder son of Mr and Mrs E. R. G. Clarke, of Wood House, Briar Hill, Purley, Surrey, and Sarah, daughter of Mr and Mrs J. R. D. Ellis, of Follens, Malton, Lincolnshire.

Mr S. E. B. Clowes and Miss N. A. Wallace. The engagement is announced between Simon, eldest son of Mr and Mrs S. E. B. Clowes, of Wapenham Manor, Towcester, and Nicola, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Malcolm Wallace, of Lochryan, Strathairn.

Mr J. J. M. Hanratty and Miss K. A. Le Blanc Smith. The engagement is announced between John Joseph Michael, second son of Dr and Mrs J. F. Hanratty, of Westminster Gardens, London, SW1, and Krista Anne, daughter of Mr and Mrs S. R. Le Blanc Smith, of Alburgh, Norfolk.

Mr F. Freund and Miss P. M. English. The engagement is announced between Paul, son of Mr and Mrs G. L. Freund, of Broadstairs, Kent, and Philippa, daughter of Mr and Mrs P. M. English, of Chislehurst, Kent.

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## Council may sell art treasures to save music education from cuts

By Martin Huckerby  
Music Reports  
The County Council may sell paintings from its collection and make substantial cuts in its music education service in an attempt to raise cash to plug the gap caused by spending cuts.

The county has a particularly fine art collection, which includes works by Paul Nash, Henry Moore, Wyndham Lewis and Augustus John, and Mr Andrew Fairbairn, the director of education, said some of them would certainly have to be sold if the appeal was unsuccessful.

Leicestershire is renowned for its schools music, but the cuts required to save the county's music and the arts, amounting to £110,000 out of a budget of £500,000, could mean that the county youth orchestras would no longer be viable.

The cuts would also mean a reduction of nearly a third in the number of peripatetic teachers of music, dance and drama, and put at risk the Leicestershire School of Music and the county drama workshop.

Mr Fairbairn said an appeal had been launched which it was hoped would raise £300,000. One pound from each person in the county would be more than enough to reach the target. The appeal would be supported by such artists as Sir William Walton, Sir Adrian Boult, Sir Peter Hall, Dame Ninette de Valois, Donald Sinden and Sir Michael Tippett.

Even if the appeal is successful, the county will still charge £30 a year to pay for transport, playing children each Saturday to Leicestershire's 10 school orchestras and bands, but the appeal would avoid fees having to be charged for instrument tuition.

At a meeting of the County Council's Education Committee last night, Mr E. W. Hinks, president, county surveyor of Mid Glamorgan County Council, was in the chair. Others present included: Sir Gervais Wainwright, Sir Peter Hall, Sir Michael Tippett, Sir William Walton, Sir Adrian Boult, Sir Peter Hall, Dame Ninette de Valois, Donald Sinden and Sir Michael Tippett.

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## OBITUARY MISS CONSTANCE APPLEBEE

Pioneer in women's hockey

Miss Constance Applebee, who introduced women's field hockey into the United States, in 1901, has died in Hampshire, at the age of 107.

Born on June 4, 1873, at Chigwell, Essex, Miss Applebee was a school teacher and was encouraged to go on with her studies. Primarily to improve her health, she became interested in physical education and eventually trained at the British College of Physical Education in London where she gained a diploma.

In the summer of 1901 this dynamic young woman went to Harvard University, United States, for a year's course in "track". Under Dr. Dudley Sargent, she proved a star pupil. One rainy afternoon Miss Applebee, the director of physical education of Vassar College, Dr. Sargent and Dr. Tait Mackenzie were discussing the merits of American and English women athletes. Miss Applebee suggested field hockey as a measure, and was amazed to find that none of her companions understood or knew of the sport.

The next afternoon Miss Applebee produced the first women's hockey game in the United States, played with a collection of ice hockey and shiny sticks, an indoor baseball and chalk lines in a concrete yard outside Harvard University gymnasium.

She remained in the United States and in 1904 was appointed director of outdoor sports at Bryn Mawr College, a post she held until 1928. In 1923 she established a hockey camp at Mr. Poono, Pennsylvania, and brought out coaches from England. This arrangement still exists today.

She was a woman of great purpose whom no situation defeated. On the occasion of a visit of the Queen of the Belgians in 1919 to Bryn Mawr the demonstration game of hockey put on for the royal visitor began late as the light was fading. The ball was soon lost and a crisis loomed, but "the Apple" rushed onto the field. "You silly asses," she cried, "lift your great feet and play. As if you had the ball."

Until 1955 Miss Applebee divided her time between England and the United States. In 1976, aged 94, she attended the International Federation of Women's Hockey Association conference and was named in the West Germany and was awarded an honorary life membership (overseas) of the All-England Women's Hockey Association.

She was also interested in elderly people, and among the many charities she supported were clubs and homes for the elderly. She had a strong belief in Christian day to day living and the lessons of give and take, working with others, initiative, concentration, endurance, sportsmanship, friendship, fun and fitness.

For the past five or six years she lived alone, getting about her house and garden in an electric chair. She talked with a strong voice, and almost up to the end took an interest in what was going on in the world, though her sight was failing. She was a truly remarkable



Alberta set  
to turn off  
the taps,  
page 19

# THE TIMES

## BUSINESS NEWS

Job losses  
show no sign  
of easing,  
page 18

Stock markets	
FT Ind 467.4, up 5.5	FT Gilt 69.04, up 0.18
Sterling	
\$2.40475, down 118 pts	Index 81.2, up 0.2
Dollar	
Index 88.0, up 0.2	DM2.0720, up 178 pts
Gold	
\$517.50, down \$12	
Money	
3 mth sterling 14 1/4-13 1/4	3 mth Euro \$ 18 1/4-18 1/4
6 mth Euro \$ 17 1/4-17 1/4	

### Curbs on commodities and gold in Bahrain

Bahrain, whose relatively liberal approach to offshore business has made it the financial centre of the Gulf, is to introduce tighter controls on gold and commodity brokers.

Mr Ibrahim Abdul-Karim, Bahrain's finance minister, said yesterday that the new regulations could include capital requirements, financial guarantees from head offices, and the quality of staff.

The new regulations will be drawn up and enforced by the Bahrain Monetary Agency, the island state's central bank. Its powers can be extended to all financial institutions, although so far they have mainly applied only to banks.

In future, commodity brokers will have to be approved by the agency, and existing companies will have to meet the same requirements.

### ATV diversification

ATV, the Midlands commercial television company, will lodge proposals to diversify its shareholdings by the end of the week. The company, which is owned by Lord Grade's ACC, has been told by the Independent Broadcasting Authority to reduce its shareholding to 51 per cent and find a new name in order to retain its franchise.

### \$10m investment trust

New Dairien Oil Trust, a \$10m investment trust, is to come to the market next month through an offer for subscription of 10 million shares at 100p. Clients of Phillips & Drew, brokers to the issue, will apply for five million shares.

Financial Editor, page 19

### Chinese accountancy

Coopers & Lybrand, the international accounting firm, has been authorized to work in China under regulations introduced in November last year. It will be the first foreign accountancy group to do so.

### MFI profits cut

MFI, the cut price furniture retailer, saw its interim pre-tax profits cut by more than a third to £4.9m. This was despite a boost in sales from £56m to £90m, largely from the acquisition of the Status Discount chain last year.

Financial Editor, page 19

### \$60m road savings

Savings of up to \$60m a year for the United Kingdom road transport industry could be achieved by fitting unbreakable external mirrors, according to Spafax, the industrial components group.

### Italian steel posts

The Italian Government has begun to tackle the crisis in the public sector steel industry by appointing Signor Mario Costa as chairman and Signor Sergio Magliola as managing director of Italsider, Italy's biggest steel-maker.

### Wall Street higher

The Dow Jones industrial average closed 10.58 points up at 949.49. The S&P 500 was 1.2846. The £ was 0.521209.

## Industry outlook still bleak despite slowdown of recession

Patricia Tiedall  
Management Correspondent

Prospects for manufacturing industry continue to be very bleak, according to the Confederation of British Industry's interpretation yesterday of its latest business trends survey.

Mr James Cleminson, chairman of the CBI's economic situation committee, said: "Our only consolation from the present survey is that things are getting worse more slowly."

The survey confirms that a definite easing in the rate of decline has occurred in the last few months.

However, Mr Cleminson said that company orders, output and employment were all worse than they were when the last survey—described as the "blackest ever"—was carried out in October. The position is expected to deteriorate further during the next quarter.

CBI leaders are still trying to convince government ministers of the damage which the high sterling exchange rate is causing to industry. They are continuing to plead for a further cut in minimum lending rate. They take no comfort from the survey findings which show that the proportion of manufacturers who are pessimistic about business prospects has dropped from 58 per cent in October to 33 per cent.

Investment continues to be "very weak indeed", said Mr Cleminson. Since there is an average delay of 12 months between authorization for investment and expenditure, the impact of the recession inevitably will continue well into 1982. The CBI forecasts a fall of 15 per cent in manufacturing investment during 1981, with the decline continuing at the same rate to the middle of 1982.

Uncertainty about demand and inadequate return on new investment are the two main reasons given by manufacturers for curbing their capital expenditure.

Mr Cleminson says it is not surprising that investment intentions remain at such a low level since real profitability (excluding North Sea oil business) is expected to fall to 2 per cent or less during 1981.

While some sectors have improved, order books generally remain weak, with 75 per cent of manufacturers assessing their



Mr Cleminson: investment still very weak.

workload at below normal levels.

There has been no change in the 84 per cent of companies who report that they are working below capacity. This represents the highest incidence of below-capacity working since the survey was introduced in 1958. However it represents the first check to the rapid spread of under-utilization since July 1979.

While stocks are continuing to be reduced at a rapid rate, 32 per cent of companies still consider their stocks of finished goods to be more than adequate.

"I had hoped there might have been a somewhat better figure on destocking", Mr Cleminson said. "We must recognize that there are to be further sharp reductions in stock and that the bottom of the recession will not be signalled until this occurs."

Stock reductions are being achieved through price cuts. Many manufacturers are holding price increases well below the growth in costs, with consequent squeeze on profitability. Export orders and deliveries have weakened but expectations for the next four months suggest smaller falls.

Despite effectively static export prices, 81 per cent of exporters still quote prices relative to those of overseas competitors as a constraint to new contracts.

## UK urged to sign computer convention

By Kenneth Owen  
Technology Editor

The British Computer Society has called on the Government to declare its intention to be a party to the Council of Europe's Convention on the protection of individuals with regard to automatic processing of personal data.

The council is due to open the convention for signature today. Norway, Sweden, Denmark and France have each enacted legislation and are ready to sign.

Austria, Germany and Luxembourg are in a position to sign and are considering their position. The remaining countries, including Britain, have not yet enacted legislation in this area.

The convention sets a basis for producing parallel legislation throughout Europe to protect the privacy of personal information in the age of computer-based information systems.

The British Computer Society said that Britain had a well-deserved reputation in development and application of computer technology. But it had fallen behind in establishing control and direction over the way personal information was used. This could inhibit the continued development of computing techniques in support of economic, social and political development.

"In particular, there is an increasing amount of data flowing between countries, and the United Kingdom must show itself willing and able to co-operate with its international partners in such activities", it said.

"We must be able to demonstrate to our European partners that we are able to protect their data when it is handled in the United Kingdom."

The Government's Data Protection Committee had made recommendations on this in December 1978, but no action had been taken. "The initiative of the Council of Europe presents an opportunity for the United Kingdom to join the international movement on data protection, and the British Computer Society recommends that the United Kingdom declares its intention to sign the convention", the society said.

This would mean that controls would have to be introduced in the management of data by user organizations to ensure its protection. The society was ready to establish the necessary standards and to set up a national certification scheme to provide these controls.

## Mr Reagan signals big cut in taxes

From Frank Vogl  
Washington, Jan 26

Big tax cuts will be announced by President Reagan in an economic policy message to the Congress on February 17 or 18, according to Mr Donald Regan, Secretary of the Treasury.

He said the Administration's economic strategy would consist of cutting taxes, sharply reducing public spending and securing stable monetary policies. It would be a "bold, innovative economic plan", he told the appropriations committee of the Senate today.

Mr Paul Volcker, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, appeared to support the new Administration's plans in testimony before the same committee today. He stressed that "I see no alternative to continued restraint of excessive money and credit growth if we are to break the inflationary momentum. If that momentum is not broken, interest rates will remain high and inflationary."

Mr Regan and Mr David Stockman, the director of the

Office of Management, also stressed to the senators that the Administration intends to curb government regulation of business. As a first step the White House intends to eliminate oil price controls, a move that will swiftly see a rise of about 12 cents on a gallon of petrol from the present price of about \$1.40.

Oil price controls are already being phased-out and they were due to end by September. Decontrol is seen as raising prices to the consumer to world market levels and so strengthening conservation, while at the same time offering better income incentives to domestic oil producers.

Mr Regan asserted that the Administration has no doubt at all that providing incentives to business and individuals to work harder will swiftly reduce inflation and secure economic growth.

To this end across-the-board business and individual tax cuts are planned. Capital gains taxes may be reduced and greater tax depreciation allowances for business are a certainty.

The President said across-the-board tax cuts were more effective than selective ones as the markets are far better in allocating resources than the government. He expected between one half and two thirds of the income tax cuts to go into savings and that under consideration are plans to increase the amount of interest on savings that people can earn free of tax.

Mr Stockman said that current fiscal year government spending was running at 23.3 per cent of gross national product and the Administration was determined to reduce the level in the next few years to 20 per cent.

Mr Regan said the Budget would be balanced within two years, by the 1983 fiscal year, and that there would be significant budget surplus in four years. The Treasury said today that the Budget deficit in December narrowed to \$3,300m from \$3,579m in November.

Mr Volcker gave warning that tax cuts not matched by spending cuts could prove to

be highly inflationary. Mr Reagan said such precise matching was not contemplated, but that the Administration viewed tax cuts and spending cuts as part of a combined economic strategy with both being essential to restore American economic health.

"I do not think we can sustain \$60,000m (£25,000m) and \$70,000m budget deficits year after year without ruining this country," the President said.

Mr Stockman told the committee that the new programme of tax cuts, spending cuts, stable monetary policies and regulatory reform, would be announced clearly to send unambiguous signals throughout the United States and world in the principles and the framework of financial and economic policy.

The officials asserted that a close relationship was being forged between the administration and the Central Bank and that fiscal policies would fully support the anti-inflationary policies of the Federal Reserve.

## Bank union says 8pc is 'derisory'

By Donald Macintyre  
Labour Reporter

The threat of possible industrial action by 16,500 staff in Trustee Savings Bank branches and offices emerged yesterday when management and union negotiators with an 8 per cent offer in response to a claim of more than 20 per cent.

Banking Insurance and Finance Union (BIFU) negotiators rejected the offer. Talks will be resumed on February 20 after a management board meeting the previous day to consider whether to improve on the 8 per cent.

Last night, however, Mr William Whitman, the union's assistant secretary with responsibility for TSB, where the union has a large majority in membership, said: "The offer is so derisory that although our normal recourse in such circumstances is to go to arbitration we would possibly have to consider industrial action."

The question however, of whether any proposal for industrial action might be put to members at TSB, which the union claims enjoyed an unblemished record of no pre-tax profits last year, would undoubtedly await the outcome



Mr Leif Mills: Single-figure offer 'just not on'.

of the resumed negotiations next month.

The talks came at a sensitive time however, because the banking unions are due to open talks on a closely similar claim with the Federation of London Clearing Bank Employers tomorrow.

Mr Leif Mills, general secretary of BIFU, which represents 70,000 of the 200,000 on the staffs of the English clearing banks, said last night that it would be "ridiculous" if the union was to receive a similar offer from the employers on Thursday.

## Call to ease HP controls on vehicles

By Roman Eisenstein

Mr John Little, chairman of the Finance Houses Association, last night called for a relaxation of credit controls on sales of cars.

Since December 1973, buyers of private cars on hire purchase contracts have had to pay one third deposit and repay the debt within two years.

Speaking at the association's annual dinner, he said that "no clear public statement has ever been made on why private cars should be singled out for such extraordinary treatment."

Mr Little suggested that term controls on private cars could be relaxed to 25 per cent deposit with a three-year repayment. This would help the motor industry and car components manufacturers.

Mr Little, who is also chairman of Lloyds and Scotts, called for equal status for finance houses and banks under the 1979 Banking Act. While the Bank of England had said that the differences between the two were merely based on the range of facilities offered and not on financial standing or financial strength, there has been evidence that the draftsmen of some recent legislation have read a different interpretation into the Act.

Little said high interest rates were having particularly bad effects on small companies. He welcomed recent cuts in interest rates but said that further reductions were essential because "real and lasting benefits" could be felt.

Pointing to official efforts to control the money supply, Mr Little said finance houses were in no way responsible for excessive growth.

## Mr Nassar may make Inveresk counterbid

By Michael Prest

Mr Edward Nassar, the international businessman, who holds 14 per cent of Inveresk, the troubled papermaker, said yesterday that he was considering a counterbid to the £7.1m offer from Georgia-Pacific Corporation of Portland, Oregon, which makes and distributes forest products and has oil and natural gas interests.

Speaking from his home in Lausanne, Switzerland, Mr Nassar said that he was looking at three options: accepting the Georgia-Pacific offer, keeping a minority stake or increasing it, and bidding for the whole of Inveresk.

Georgia-Pacific's terms, revealed last week as shares in Georgia-Pacific, cash or a combination, equivalent to 35 an Inveresk share. Mr Nassar said: "I honestly think it is very cheap."

He complained that shareholders were being kept in the dark. "I feel we should be given much more information."

In 1979 Inveresk made a pre-tax profit of £526,000. But in the first half of last year it lost £1.6m, and a precondition of the Georgia-Pacific offer is that

1980 losses are not more than £7m.

Mr Nassar said: "I don't think it is as bad as that. They have got a new plant in Scotland which surely can be put right. The company is backed by a lot of property." In the last accounts Inveresk's investment properties were valued at £8.3m.

Mr Nassar, who has interests in five countries, suggested that the property interests could be separated from papermaking. He said: "If the papermaking were better managed, both parts could be profitable."

But Mr Nassar said that he was unlikely to make a move until he had seen the full offer document, due to be published in a few weeks' time. Mr Tom Corrigan, chairman of Inveresk, said he had heard nothing from Mr Nassar.

Georgia-Pacific's sales in 1979 were \$5,200m (£2,157m). Capitalization is around \$2,500m.

Mr Nassar is confident that he can raise the finance for a bid. But he emphasizes that discussions are still in the preliminary stage, and did not say where the money would come from.

## Chemical industry faces overtime ban

A move to ban overtime throughout the chemical industry to counter job cuts and plant closures came yesterday from members of the General and Municipal Workers Union.

The decision now goes to the union's national executive who are almost certain to give it their backing.

A two-day conference of dele-

gates representing 100,000 chemical workers wants the union to seek talks with other unions in the industry to persuade them to follow their lead.

This could affect 340 chemical companies in all divisions from plastics to soap powders. The largest employer is ICI, which is already seeking substantial cutbacks in staff.

Mr David Warburton the union's national organiser for the industry, said members who took industrial action to resist enforced redundancies would get official backing.

He said many companies were using the recession as an excuse to cut deeper into the labour force.

Nicholas Hirst

## Food group goes to market for £45m

By Peter Weinwright

Associated Dairies, the £450m Leeds-based food retailing group which spent £37.5m on buying the Allied Retailers carpets and furniture business, is the first group this year to test the stock market for new money.

Advised by Baring Brothers, the merchant bankers, it is proposing to issue 30.27 million new ordinary shares at 150p a share to ordinary shareholders in the proportion of one to eight.

The issue is designed to raise £45m after expenses. Brokers to the issue are Scrimgeour, Kemp & Co.

Associated Dairies is noted for its string of Asda supermarkets, units of at least 25,000 square feet of selling space with car parks on the same level. The group now has 59 of these huge stores, mostly in the north of England.

The group opened London's first large superstore at Park Royal last October.

However, fewer than half a dozen of the superstores are in the south of England where planning permission is hard to get. The one at Park Royal has a selling area of 48,000 square feet on one floor besides parking for 600 cars. But the store at the Aston Villa football ground is 78,000 square feet.

Financial Editor, page 19

## Dollar rises strongly in late trading

The dollar soared in late trading on the news that the United States government had ended oil price controls and announced tax and public spending cuts. Having been steady against the American currency for most of the day, the pound gave ground and closed 118 points down at \$2.40475.

But sterling's effective exchange rate index, measured against a basket of major currencies, ended the day up 0.2 at 81.2. This reflects the pound's strength against European currencies. In addition, sterling's late losses against the dollar may not have been fully accounted for at the time the index was calculated.

Both the pound and the dollar gained support yesterday from switching out of gold. The metal fell a further \$12 in London in reaction to Monday's sharp drop.

The pound is an attractive currency to hold, with high interest rates relative to European levels. North Sea oil and a large current account surplus on the balance of payments.

The main factors underpinning the American currency are high interest rates and expectations of rises in the near future.

The strength of these two currencies contrasts with the continuing weakness of the Deutsche mark.

## Rowland ally for Sir Hugh Fraser at crucial meeting

By Philip Robinson

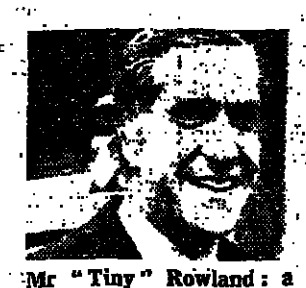
The crucial meeting of the 15 directors of the House of Fraser this morning, at which Sir Hugh expects a boardroom coup to vote him out as chairman, will be attended by Mr Rowland "Tiny" Rowland, his new ally.

It is understood that this will be one of the few Fraser board meetings which Mr Rowland has attended in person since he was deposed as non-executive deputy chairman of Britain's largest stores group by Professor Roland Smith last August. Lord Duncan Sandys, the other Lomro nominee, will be represented by Mr Paul Spicer, a fellow Lomro director.

The new friendship between Sir Hugh and Mr Rowland—at loggerheads until last Thursday when they agreed that public handouts to shareholders as estimated £1m had been all a misunderstanding—represents a commanding force in terms of shareholding.

Together they can influence 33.5 per cent of the total Fraser equity and it is estimated that personal loyalty from smaller shareholders to the Fraser family could give them a further 10 per cent.

Immediately after the reconciliation, Mr Spicer said that Lomro would now back Sir Hugh as chairman and wanted to work together in the best interests of the House of Fraser. Sir Hugh has already said that if he loses



Mr "Tiny" Rowland: a rare ally.

today, it is likely that there will be another special shareholders' meeting to fight out the matter in an American-style proxy battle.

Twice in the past seven months, Sir Hugh has been victorious by a handsome majority in fending off Lomro's public attacks. It is reckoned in the City that the two are virtually unstoppable now that they have joined forces.

But if Sir Hugh and Mr Rowland are reconciled, there are dark rumblings from some of the pension funds and insurance companies whose holdings in Fraser account for about 40 per cent of the total equity, and whose combined stakes are worth £72m.

A meeting of the National Association of

### HOUSE OF FRASER: THE LARGEST SHAREHOLDERS

Holder	percentage of total equity	Holder	percentage of total equity
Lomro	29.99	Midland Bank Trust	1.51
Fraser Trustees	3.54	Post Office Pension Fund	1.38
National Coal Board		Robert Fleming Nominees	1.01
Pension Fund	2.72	(major banks)	
British Rail Pension Fund	1.87	Clydesdale Bank head	0.88
Legal & General Assurance	1.83	office nominees	0.88
		Prudential Corporation	0.84

Pension Funds took place before last Tuesday's special shareholders' meeting, at which it was understood disquiet was expressed over Fraser.

Mr Hugh Jenkins, director-general of the National Coal Board Pension Fund, is understood to be heading a number of funds wishing to meet members of the Fraser board.

Sir Hugh says he has been contacted by the Post Office Pension Fund and the Lomro Works Pension Trust, owners of 533,360 shares.

But the Post Office director yesterday said he was seeking a meeting and a spokesman for the Lucas fund said: "I just don't want to comment. There seems to be confusion over who

is really trying to organize it." Mr Jenkins was unavailable for comment.

At least one institution, British Rail, has made it clear to the Fraser board that it was "uncomfortable" at giving support to Sir Hugh.

It is understood that a number of pension funds gave qualified support in an attempt to fend off Lomro, but said they were not happy with the running of the company.

Most believe that there is no quick cure for Fraser and to blame one man by dismissing him is not the answer. Opinion is divided on whether Sir Hugh should go.

Few feel that S. G. Warburg, the group's merchant bankers whose future is also up for discussion today should be dismissed. One fund manager said: "Clearly changes are needed at Fraser, and Warburg's have been in long enough to know what is happening and have assessed what is best for the company. To change advisers now would merely delay the timing of the changes needed."

The insurance company shareholders say they are watching the situation closely. Meanwhile, today's meeting could create a problem for Rowland—Sir Hugh is due to resume the chairmanship of the Fraser subsidiary at the end of the month.

Institutions' role, page 19

### PRICE CHANGES

#### Rises

Amal power	7p to 73p
Elec Higgs	2p to 62p
Electrocomp	35p to 663p
Euromark Int	15p to 246p
Highland Int	10p to 105p

#### Falls

Abarco	£3 to £151
Andrews	10p to 34p
East Dagle	5p to 84p
Hamerley	6p to 160p
Lockwoods Fds	2p to 32p

Kode Int	15p to 265p
Magnet & Stms	12p to 124p
Renwick Corp	8p to 85p
Richmond Wall	4p to 28p
Royal Wores	15p to 220p

MFI W'house	11p to 5
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BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

# Inchcape makes hay in the Far East

Inchcape matched market hopes with interim profits up by more than a quarter of £39.1m. But what took the gilt off the gingerbread—and left the shares 12p lower at 428p—was the absence of an expected dividend increase and dark hints about the effects of recession in the second-half, bearing in mind that with December year-ends for its overseas subsidiaries, Inchcape is talking with the benefit of hindsight the market was clearly not prepared to ignore the point.

Meanwhile Inchcape's tax charge up from £7.7m to a more normal £17.2m speaks volumes about the geographical pattern of economic conditions. Profits from the low-tax United Kingdom and Middle East areas have been evaporating to be replaced by booming returns from the harsher tax regimes of South East Asia and the Far East.

Overall profits from the Pacific basin have increased their share of the total from just over half last time to close on three-quarters particularly strongly. In stark contrast Inchcape's Manna Egerton motor subsidiary in the United Kingdom has plunged from a pretax profit of £1.4m to a loss of £664,000 in the face of weak demand and big losses in Manna Egerton Furniture.

It is this sort of experience presumably which has encouraged caution on the dividend front although it must be a fair bet that Inchcape will make up the ground with a 10 per cent increase for the year at the final stage.

Despite the warnings profits still seem likely to show a sound gain to around £75m from last time's £65.6m.

This prospect implying a yield of 6.7 per cent and a fully-taxed p/e ratio of over 11 will do little for the share rating in the short-term. But it may not be too many months before institutional buying on further recovery hopes enlivens the picture.

## Reed International Remaining on a low base

Reed International's 1980/81 period will be badly distorted by the experience of the first quarter in which industrial troubles, mainly in the publishing business, cost profits around £12m.

In the second quarter it returned to a base, albeit one that was well down on last year, and that trend continued into the third quarter with profits at £15m still way adrift of the £30m earned in the comparable period a year ago.

The pattern remains fairly constant—in the United Kingdom at the moment the recession is fierce in the newspaper business where Reed has undertaken a heavy closure programme.

Publishing, though, had a good quarter, although advertising revenues are beginning to slip, and paint and building products and packaging are all proving resilient even though volumes are down.

Leaving aside the deflationary effect of converting overseas profits into sterling, the Quebec papermill continues reasonably well; the recession, though, is beginning to hurt in Europe while the United States wellcoverings business has more problems.

The question for the shares of course is whether Reed will hold the dividend (it did at the interim) even though it may well be uncovered on a current cost basis.

The chances are on the back of a strong balance sheet that it will unless the trading situation deteriorates markedly in the final quarter—two reasons, then, for thinking the shares have recovery potential at 183p yielding 10.1 per cent and selling at perhaps 51 times likely earnings.

## MFI Cutting back

Investor confidence in MFI as a glamour stock vanished yesterday when it reported interim profits of only £4.9m, £3.1m down on last year and considerably below expectations.

The market had seemed prepared to give MFI a second chance following the £30m Status discount merger and the revised profits forecast last year, but the 11p fall to 52p in the share price yesterday ended all that.

Clearly the depth of the recession was partly to blame for the downturn as flat pack furniture demand suffered with the rest of the industry but Status has proved costly in terms of money and management as MFI has spent the last six months cutting back the number of Status stores from 66 to 29, with more closures scheduled for the second half. Borrowings, which were non-existent until 1979 rose by £3m to £18.3m, since the year end.

So, despite a sales increase from £56.1m to £90m, which represented a 2 per cent volume improvement in the original MFI stores, net margins have fallen significantly and judging by the group's own lack of optimism on the remainder of the year's trading, they will be hard pressed to recover.

Moreover, MFI's attempts to cut borrowings by the sale and leaseback of the Northampton premises whose book value is £8m has not yet borne fruit and the group looks as if it will be forced to sacrifice market share when it finally raises prices.

However, the second half will include the results of two of the three annual sales which suggests profits in the range of £10m-£15m. MFI will presumably try hard to maintain the dividend. If it does the prospective yield is 7.2 per cent, nothing special given the risks.

Investment trusts have regained some lost ground over the past year with discounts falling from around 30 per cent to 22 per cent. Reminiscent too of their high-flying days in the early seventies when a host of specialist vehicles were launched, there has been a growing interest in trusts concentrating on particular sectors or areas. The latest is New Darien Oil Trust. Eschewing the frothy North Sea secondary oil stocks, Darien will invest three-quarters of its £10m in United States secondary oil and gas companies.

It reckons prices there more realistically reflect proven reserves, most drilling is onshore and cheap and geared to capital growth—Darien is looking forward to price de-control in the United States.

The names associated with Darien include Barclays Merchant Bank and Phillips & Drew, whose clients will take half the 10m shares which come with warrants attached. Darien will be managed by a new company Hodgson Martin Ltd.

## Asda Building more superstores

Word of a cash call from Associated Dairies got out on Monday and the shares fell 6p to 184p. So when it became official yesterday they only slipped a further 2p to 182p.

Asda is raising £45m through a one-for-eight issue, at 154p, and reports in the 28 weeks to mid-November last almost unchanged pretax profits of £22.8m. Even so, the 1980-81 peak was 200p so the market is taking the first old fashioned rights issue in ordinary shares of the new year in its stride.

This is understandable. The existing shares yield only 2.5 per cent and £45m of new money is only a tenth of the total market capitalization. The dividend is going up by 17.5 per cent and earnings a share are unlikely to suffer dilution.

The cost of the issue to the group is only 3.5 per cent, so it hardly had an incentive to consume property assets through sale and leaseback like Fraser and Tesco, let alone issue convertible loan stocks.

Even so, the cash call catches Asda as it pauses on its uphill climb. In 1979-80 the group boasted pretax profits from £41m to £50m thanks to good going in carpets and furniture beside food. But in the latest half year they only moved from £22.5m to £22.8m, as Williams Furniture and Ukay Furnishing Centres lost money.

So the signs point to profits of say £51m this full year, with streamlining of Williams Furniture being treated as an extraordinary item. The hope for the next financial year should be of an end to recession, and Asda once again climbing uphill now that it has tackled its non-food problems.

The £45m is to be spent almost wholly on Asda superstores. The group has 59 at present and plans to build between six to eight a year. Between now and April, 1983, it will spend on capital account nearly £150m, forcing the group to borrow the issue. This highlights the cost of building superstores now that sites are so scarce.

To many outsiders Sir Hugh Fraser and Lord Lomax's chief executive Mr Roland "Tiny" Rowland seem to have been carrying on a private feud in the incongruous public battleground of the House of Fraser. Important issues about the running of the department stores group—whose record in the last few years has hardly impressed the City—appear to have become mixed up in bitter personal differences which may work to the detriment of the long-term health of Fraser and the interests of other shareholders.

Last week's dramatic eleven-hour reconciliation in Scotland between Sir Hugh and Mr Rowland, now back on the same side fighting off a possible coup from other directors to get rid of Sir Hugh as chairman, has only served to heighten the suspicion that House of Fraser's future lies in the hands of two very powerful men whose motives for their actions are far from clear.

Certainly, that seems to be the conclusion of Fraser's financial advisers, merchant bankers Cazenove, who seem to be as bemused as anyone about what exactly is going on at Fraser.

Previous boardroom wrangles like this have usually stung the investing institutions into action. But during all the brouhaha of the past year or more the institutions, who collectively speak for more than 35 per cent of the shares, have remained curiously silent. They have presumably preferred to use the opportunity of the extraordinary general meetings to show that while they are no great fans of House of Fraser management they have not been convinced by Mr Rowland's arguments.

There is another interpretation. This is that they have been using Warburg and Cazenove as sounding boards about what is actually going on, but have not wanted to upset the applicant because of widespread expectations that Lombro would eventually use its near 30 per cent holding as the springboard for a full bid, which would give them handsome capital gains.

Only in the last few days have the institutions, through their investment protection committee, started to involve themselves more directly, yet again leaving them open to the criticism that they come on to the scene far too late in the day to be really effective.

The precise role of the institutions in industrial management is probably still as ill-defined as ever. In part, that is their own fault, since most of the institutions' activities are shrouded in secrecy. In many cases that is rightly so, since to come out

Ronald Pullen

# When should the institutions intervene?

into the open and announce that they were taking a closer interest in any particular company could easily undermine confidence in it. But it is still fair to conclude that the balance between power and accountability is imperfectly understood both within the institutions and within industrial companies.

Critics say that in the past year the issue of dawn raids has shown the institutions in a bad light. When they have been approached for shares in such circumstances their professed interest in the long-term future of a company seems often to have given way to a compelling desire for short-term gain.

Both the Wilson Committee's report and recent speeches by Sir Keith Joseph, the Industry Secretary, have made it clear how the official view has changed, with the investing institutions left in no doubt that they must take a closer strategic interest in industrial performance.

The debate over the right and proper role of the institutions in industrial management has been an enduring one in the City for well over a decade. Before that, fund managers tended to be much less confident of their ability to assess company performance, although the Prudential always prided itself, even before the war, on its behind-the-scenes influence.

But it was not until the early 1970s that there were moves to put the links between the users and providers of capital on a more formal footing. The background to this was a rapid growth in the financial power of the institutions, the disbanding of the old Industrial Reorganisation Corporation (which had kept a watching brief on vulnerable sectors of the economy) and a series of spectacular crashes—like those of Rolls-Royce and Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, which raised important questions about company managements.

The catalyst was the Bank of England, which despite heated opposition from some of the institutions set up the Institutional Shareholders Committee. Institutions, however, continued to believe that their primary skills lay in investing and that they had little expertise in industrial management, so that particular initiative withered away. They argued that their main responsibility was to their investors, for whom as trustees they could not take the sort of risks inherent in the closer relationship with industry envisaged at the time.

Since then much of the work of the individual protection committees has been routine, dealing with changes in matters directly affecting them as shareholders, such as alterations to articles of association or increases in borrowing limits.

Occasionally, however, the institutions have flexed their muscles publicly on matters of wider import. A few years ago the institutions left Costs Patents in no doubt that it passed a dividend again with no good reason there would be hell to pay; they exploited the boardroom row at Rank between Sir John Davis and Mr Graham Dowson to get rid of the company's non-voting structure.

More recently, Barclays Bank was rapped over the knuckles for its investment trust, which they argued discriminated against existing shareholders; and during the Allied-Lyons takeover they engineered a change in The Stock Exchange's rules so that shareholders would be consulted on major deals.

In pursuing Newman Industries through the courts over some of its controversial deals, the Prudential won an important victory in standing up for the rights of small and large shareholders. But there have been too many cases where the institutions have stood aside, thereby giving ammunition to the City's critics who say that they should be more robust. House of Fraser is likely to be yet another occasion when firmer action by the institutions could, and should, have altered the course of events.

Joan Best discusses the growing row over Canada's energy policy

# Alberta prepares to turn the taps off

Ottawa

In a little over a month Alberta will start to turn off the oil taps to the rest of Canada—an act which will keep up the already bitter row between the federal government and this mineral-rich province over energy policy and, even more important, the balance of political power.

Despite the battering which it has taken from opposition members of parliament, provincial politicians in the Canadian West and the oil industry, the federal government's national energy programme—the immediate cause of all the fuss—looks like staying in place.

"We do not intend to back off from these policies," Mr Mark Lalonde, the energy minister, told an opposition questioner in the Commons recently. "We are determined to achieve these goals and we will."

The goals are: "Canadianization" of the oil and natural gas industry; substitution of alternate forms of energy, including gas, for oil; and energy self-sufficiency by 1990.

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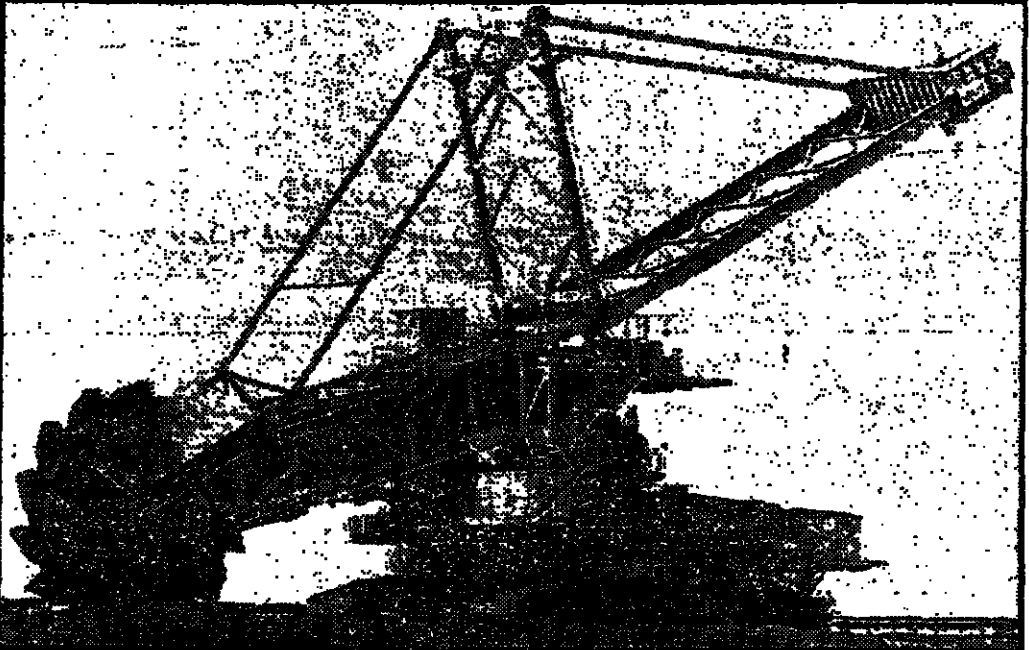
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A huge excavating machine at work in the Athabasca oil sand field at Fort McMurray, Alberta: the province thinks the proposed increases would still leave the price of domestically produced oil too far behind the prevailing world price.

Alberta, the government imposed a levy not only on gas sold in the United States but on that sold in Canada, too.

It also announced a plan to increase domestic ownership of the country's oil and gas industry to at least 50 per cent by the end of the decade (the industry is now about 80 per cent American-owned and controlled) and it provided for a series of hefty increases—a total of C\$17.30 over four years—in the price of domestically-produced oil, nearly all of which comes from Alberta.

Alberta was far from satisfied with this, since it will still leave the price of a barrel of oil at only C\$34 in 1983, well below even the present world price of close to US\$40 a barrel.

Federal policy for some years has been to keep Canadian oil prices artificially low, to help the competitive position of the country's industry.

Mr Lougheed's response to the national energy programme was an accusation that the federal government was "walking into our home and occupied the living room" and the decision to cut oil production.

Output is to be cut by 180,000 barrels a day, or about a fifth, against his province by the March 1. Alberta has said that it will not proceed with the reduction if there is evidence that it would cause serious oil shortages but at present it shows every intention of going ahead.

Mr Lougheed has also promised to cancel the cuts if the federal government agrees to negotiate "a new and fairer arrangement on petroleum pricing."

Both sides in the dispute have indicated that they are prepared to reopen negotiations and both have good reason to try to reach a settlement. Apart from the absurdity of trying to carry out a national energy policy while at loggerheads with the key producing province, the federal regime must view with alarm the immediate prospect of an oil reduction by Alberta.

If it decided to make up the full 180,000-barrel daily deficit by buying on the world spot market, the federal government could end up spending at least C\$2,500m a year.

As for Alberta, despite its fabulously wealthy and powerful treasury overflowing with petrodollars—even at the ridiculously low price per barrel obtaining in Canada—it can ill-afford the loss in income and jobs that would result from cutbacks on the scale proposed.

non-committally: "We are prepared to discuss with the producing provinces all items which might lead to a conclusion that an agreement would be fair to all parties."

Meanwhile, the national energy programme is taking its toll in other directions. Oil drilling rigs are said to be moving back to the United States from western Canada because of reduced exploration incentives.

Earlier this month, Mobil Oil Canada cut its 1981 capital investment programme from C\$359m to C\$195m, with a warning that the energy programme would reduce the projected exploration income by more than 60 per cent. The investment value of several planned projects was now doubtful, the company said.

Mobil operates a consortium which wants to develop the Hibernia discovery off the Newfoundland coast.

In Toronto the chairman of the Toronto-Dominion Bank, Mr Richard Thomson, went further. He told the bank's annual meeting in Toronto that the energy programme could produce a "national disaster". It could leave Canada, which already imports large quantities of oil for its eastern seaboard, more dependent on offshore petroleum and so draw the country further away from rather than towards energy self-sufficiency.

It is also taken for granted in some quarters that the Canadianization aspect of the energy programme will eventually cause repercussions in the international investment community and in board rooms of the multinational oil companies.

Among other things, the plan calls for Petro-Canada, a crown-owned company, to take over the Canadian operations of one or more of the multinationals—more if the multinationals are not prepared to negotiate and presumably through expropriation if necessary.

Mr Lalonde says that he hopes that in 1981 Petro-Canada will buy out "at least one, two or three foreign companies with a view to enhancing Canadian ownership."

Mr MacEachen for his part, is little impressed by what he calls the "doleful dirges" recited by opposition MPs. "I think it is absolutely clear that the cash flow available to the industry is ample and growing," he told the Commons.

"No other sector in the Canadian economy has the opportunity for growth and development that this industry has."

# Business Diary: Go West, young woman • Card vote

The engineering industry, never a great employer of women at management level, has come up with a useful way of making the fifth anniversary of the passage of the Sex Discrimination Act and the implementation of the Equal Pay Act.

Harry Wood, head of the management development centre of the West Midlands Engineering Employers' Association, plans to hold courses this year aimed at preparing women for jobs in management.

Furthermore, the WMEA is acting as host to Stephanie Gaunt and Mandy Collett, two researchers with a grant from the Equal Opportunities Commission. With it they will be coming up with ideas for company training programmes that discriminate not against women, but against men.

A "Women in Management" course was held last year, after Wood noted that the proportion of women in engineering management was "at around 2 per cent" and still falling.

This was a six-week course attended by 12 women, of whom all but two were unemployed. Employers inside and outside engineering were reluctant to free women for a course that long.

The two women researchers were recruited from last year's intake, Stephanie Gaunt being one of the two who had a job. The other woman who had a job has since been promoted and all the others have since found work.

This year's courses will be restricted so that more employed women can enrol.

If I had had some of our office writing paper on me yesterday I would have sought Peter Royle's opinion of it; but I had to make do with my card.

Royle, a director of his family's printing company, W. R. Royle, is chairman of the council which is asking 50,000 users of business stationery to enter for the 1981 British Letterhead Awards.

On being pressed to comment, Royle described my card the standard item which Timespeople prefer to contacts, as "terrible."

I think Royle may have a point, although in fairness I must point out that our design people were not too taken with Royle's own card.

Royle's remarks were not the first printing surprise of the day. As I left to see him I opened a letter which was a fraternal greeting sent to all Times Newspapers employees, by Rupert Murdoch. This was under a "Times Newspapers letter-heading, although at this time Murdoch's bid was still conditional.

But then Rupert Murdoch himself may have been surprised to see himself described as Robert Murdoch in an edition of yesterday's paper.

There is some indignation among consumers about a singularly complacent (and hitherto unnoticed) announcement by the Department of Trade. It purports to give an account of a recent meeting of the Economic Community Group (CECG) had with Sally Oppenheim, the Minister for Consumer Affairs.

The CECG represents 22 United Kingdom consumer organizations and it wanted the meeting to put across its unanimous view that it would be disastrous if the Government persisted with its intention to put into the EEC's draft directive on product liability a state of the art defence.

This would enable the makers of products which subsequently prove dangerous to plead "I didn't know the gun was loaded."

The Department of Trade's announcement says: "It was recognized that there was a considerable divergence of views even within the consumer movement on many aspects of the directive" and concludes that "one of the most important improvements" Mrs Oppenheim would be seeking to the directive would be "the introduction of the state of the art defence."

The CECG says that its member groups have seldom been so united as they are in opposition to the Government's position on the "state of the

W R Royle and Son Limited / Royle Publications Limited  
Card vote

W R Royle and Son Limited / Royle Publications Limited  
Card vote

Wilfred Broad retires as Director of Finance at Trusthouse Forte, next week—not Financial Director, you will note, though as Broad says with an inwardness that could only be understood by those within the charmed inner circle at Sir Charles Forte's great hotels and catering empire: "It's the same thing, but slightly different."

To outsiders it seems strange that a company as large as this should have no main board financial director, even allowing for the assumption—largely correct—that Sir Charles himself takes all crucial decisions, including financial ones.

Nevertheless, since retiring in 1976 from Reed International where he was financial director and deputy chairman under Lord Ryder, Broad has been deeply concerned with strategic financial thinking within Trusthouse.

Fortunately for Sir Charles the counsels of Broad, now aged 66, will still be available: he will remain a financial consultant to Sir Charles for at least a year, though his job as Director of Finance goes to Donald Main of Alcan.

Out of place: reader J. T. Harvey writes from Kennington, south London, to point out a passage in an advertisement which appeared in this paper for a housekeeper. One attraction of the job was that most of the domestic work was done by "a daily lady who attends twice a week."

Ross Davies

**McCORQUODALE**  
Specialist international printers

Results for the year to 30 September:-

	1980 £000	1979 £000	% Increase
Turnover	80,635	67,188	20.0
Profit before tax and extraordinary items	4,895	4,634	5.8
Earnings per share	26.06p	24.58p	6.0
Dividends per share	7.89p	7.50p	5.2

"For the fourth consecutive year the Group has increased both profits and earnings per share.

Our overseas companies have made a very important contribution, particularly those in North America.

Apart from book printing, our other U.K. companies performed very creditably in highly competitive markets.

We face the future with confidence and a great deal of determination."

Alastair McCorquodale, Chairman

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## FINANCIAL NEWS

## Stock markets

## Equities still strong on hopes of MLR cut

Hopes of a cut in MLR in the Budget on March 10 kept hopes alive in the market yesterday as equities maintained their strong start to the account.

Volume was slightly up on Monday's business, but trade remained thin with prices showing exaggerated gains. Once again investors were concentrating their efforts on the more favourable sectors with strong performances by electricals, insurance and oil shares. Elsewhere, dealers were kept on the hop by the numerous bid situations and company news.

So, sentiment continued to improve and with the unemployment figures were released, which showed the eighth consecutive increase to 2.4m, the market was able to disregard it. Only the latest gloomy report from the CBI caused any mutterings, but after lunch the market continued its advance helped by a strong opening on Wall Street.

The FT Index rose by 5.7 by midday, before retreating to only 3.8 higher at 3pm. It eventually closed 5.5 up at 467.4.

Gold shares were also in better form following the rally in the bullion price, up at \$517.50.

Gilt calls came back into favour, helped by speculation that the new "tap", where applications close today, will be warmly received and a bullish circular from brokers Panmure Gordon.

In longs, gains of up to 14 were reported, while in shorts, prices closed unchanged after earlier rises of 1/16.

Leading industrial saw little inquiry but share prices continued to be marked higher in line with the advance in the rest of the market. Among those to end the day 2p or 3p higher were ICI at 290p, Bechtel at 172p, Glaxo at 255p, Unilever at 446p and GKN at 143p.

In papers, full-year figures from Reed International were

in line with most expectations and shares ended the day 1p higher at 183p, while Bower remained unchanged at 183p. Shares of Bristol Evening Post picked up 5p to 173p, still overshadowed by fears that the 1980-a-share bid from Associated Newspapers might be referred to the Monopolies Commission. Shares of

Shareholders of UDT waiting patiently for further news of the 60p-a-share bid from Lloyd's. A cash offer may have much longer to wait. The directors were said to have had a meeting with the institutions yesterday which may signal the rejection of L & S followed by a counter-bid from elsewhere. The shares rose 1p to 53p.

Associated hardened 3p to 238p. Meanwhile, news that Reed International's offer for The Times and Sunday Times would not be referred to the Monopolies Commission resulted in a 2p rise at 93p, while International Thomson ended 7p higher at 284p.

Electricity enjoyed another worthwhile session but were reported to be looking a little tired by the close, in spite of the continuing thin conditions. The group rose 5p to 600p, Thorn EMI 9p to 297p and Plessey 3p

to 276p, but Racal reporting tomorrow, looked decidedly nervous, losing 7p to 308p.

Speculative attention lifted Muirhead 7p to 84p as buyers still banked on a bid from Tyco Laboratories. Interest was also expressed in Electrocomp, up 35p at 665p, and Koda International 15p better at 285p.

Full-year figures from Eurotherm International were judged to be much better than expected as the shares advanced 15p to 246p and Unitech, reporting next week, expanded 10p to 252p.

In foods, the expected 45m rights issue from Associated Dairies caused only mild interest as the shares slipped 2p to 183p, but Glass Glover, weighing in with improved full-year figures, closed 4p dearer at 54p. In contrast, Somportex, which reported recently, dropped 30p to 730p on profit-taking.

The reduction in profits at the half-way stage left Benjamin Priest 7p lighter at 45p, while disappointing figures and a line of 1m shares on offer at 51p left MFL Furniture tumbling 11p to 52p.

Disappointing figures also left Incheape 12p lower at 428p, but dealers took heart in the interim statement from Stewart Plastics, 3p higher at 79p. A £900m cash-injection by

the Government saw shares of EL rise 3p to 21p in an exceptionally thin market which in turn sparked off a 6p rally in Lucas at 171p, in the wake of recent warnings about lay-offs.

Shares of Renwick returned from suspension up 8p at 86p following the counter-bid from Kangra International and hopes of improved terms from Bahco lifted Record Ridgway 6p to 43p. W. A. Tyndal, holding a sizable stake in Record, rose 4p to 35p.

Speculative buying had Pritchard Services 6p ahead at 130p, along with Richards & Wallington, 4p to 28p. R. P. Martin added 2p to 150p despite the breakdown in talks with Bechtel. Acquisition news had Dundonian 7p heavier at 64p and F. Pratt, awaiting figures, climbed 7p to 50p. But Mercantile House encountered good buying in a thin market, but the back of recent figures, rising 30p to 600p.

Builders made further good gains, with rises in Redland 7p to 167p, Blue Circle 6p to 350p and Barratt Developments 8p to 155p.

But no further increase in duty in the forthcoming Budget brought a welcome spurt to drink shares. Allied added 2p to 67p as did Bass 8p to 207p, Grand Metropolitan 3p to 162p, Arthur Bell 6p to

170p and Distillers 3p to 181p.

News of President Reagan's proposals to de-control the price of oil saw renewed interest in oils. BP expanded

Note the recent weakness in shares of Dreamland Electricals where the price has dropped from 25p to the low as 17p. Brokers are worried that full-year profits, due soon, may be worse than expected, after the mild winter. Dreamland admits to a sharp drop in demand, which has put its factory on a three-day week and is likely to hit profits. The shares rose 1p to 20p yesterday.

Sp to 410p, Ultramar 5p to 488p and Lasso 13p to 687p, but switching into Royal Dutch saw Shell 6p off at 428p.

Among second-liners, KCA International rose 3p to 171p on news of its 51 per cent acquisition of Baron Oil Clyde Petroleum was also wanted, up 65p at 760p despite details of a gas find in the Isle of Wight.

The steeper gold price brought in buyers from the Continent and New York for mines with Anglo Am Gold up £1 at £361, St Helena £1 to £151 and Vaal Reefs £1 to £31.

Equity turnover on January 26 was £98.132m (15,908 bargains). The most active stocks, according to the Exchange Telegraph, were Batts, BAI, GEC, Shell, De Beers, ICI, KCA, P&O, Hong Kong and Shanghai, Burmah, Charterhouse, Premier Oil, and Tricor.

Traded options had a better day with 1,186 contracts. Courtauld, April 1981, and Grand Metropolitan April and July 1981 were active, while Loro May 100s and 110s were busiest.

Traditional options saw calls arranged in gold shares, Western Deep, West Dage, Elsborg, and Frax. Starz Geduld at a uniformly high 15 per cent of their share prices. Puts were done in ICI at 14p.

## Briefly

Premier Consolidated Offshields: Conroy Petroleum and Natural Resources and Premier have agreed to form a consortium which will apply for exclusive exploration rights in offshore fish waters. Both Premier and Conroy not only will seek blocks under the proposed second round of licensing offshore, but also may seek allocations of blocks under the "open-door" approach to the Department of Arthur Lee & Sons: Mr P. W. Lee, chairman, reports in his annual statement that the trading situation remains depressed. It does seem possible, he says, that the low point in order intake was in October and there has been some slight improvement since then. Nevertheless, the current half-year is likely to be "very unsatisfactory".

Reo Stalks Organisation: Mr Reo Stalks, the chairman, reports that trading in the few months since the end of 1980 has been very difficult, although certain areas of business seem to be continuing. He is confident that if the group is affected in the short-term by the recession, it will continue to prosper and be successful.

Stewart Securities: Turnover for half-year to October 31, 1980, £4.17m (£4.25m). Pretax profits £1.25m (£1.05m), including interest receivable of £62,000 (£62,000). Interim dividend unchanged. Vantage Securities: Gross income for 1980, £56,000 (£55,000). Total dividend £1.5p (£1.25p) gross. Bertram Securities: Turnover for year to September 28, 1980, £4.28m (£4.41m). Pretax profits £1,040,000 (£980,000). No dividend. Local Authority Bonds: Interest rate on this week's issues of Local Authority yearling bonds is 13 1/2 per cent (last week 13 1/2 per cent at 100).

Hambro Trust (the company's principal asset comprises shares in the Hambro Trust). The increase in dividends receivable during the half-year to December 31, 1980, mainly from Hambro Trust, has resulted in a 10 per cent increase in the amount available for ordinary shareholders to £207,000, compared with last year's £157,000. The directors have decided to increase the rate of interim dividends to 1.35p per share (the 1980 interim dividend was 1.25p) and 25p (fully paid) ordinary shares, compared with 1p per share (net) last year.

Senior First City Banking: An agreement in principle has been reached for Charterhouse Development Capital to purchase a 50 per cent stake in E. W. McDonald Construction. £175,000. This Selkirk-based civil engineering contractor is currently working on a £1.5m contract for the construction of a new power station in the north of Scotland, intended to develop its activities in Central Scotland.

By Richard Allen Insurance Correspondent

Rocked by three years of heavy losses, marine underwriters in the London insurance market still see little hope of recovery in the near future.

Speaking at the annual meeting of the Institute of London Underwriters yesterday, Mr Geoffrey Merriman, the chairman, claimed that some underwriters are now making losses even after taking into account investment income earned on premiums. "It is a bleak outlook for 1981", he said.

The ILU, which represents the company side of the marine insurance market in London, recently reported a significant decline in overall merchant

## Kangra International wins control of Renwick Group

By Peter Wilson-Smith

Kangra International Holdings has won control of Renwick Group and is making a general 85p-a-share offer, valuing the distribution to travel agents group at £7.5m—nearly a third more than the agreed bid from AAH which lapsed earlier this month. Renwick shares closed 8p up at 86p.

Mr G. J. Beck, a South African businessman, has emerged as the principal behind Kangra, an off-the-shelf Hongkong company. Mr Beck has private interests in South Africa, which include seven coal mines, property, stores and horse-breeding.

Kangra built up a 27.5 per cent stake in the Renwick voting shares just before Christmas and successive market purchases carried out by stockbrokers A. J. Bekhor. On Monday, it gained control of Renwick by buying another 2.23m shares at 85p from Uto Bank of Zurich, giving it 50.9 per cent of the voting capital. Uto Bank also acquired its shares, through Bekhor.

Presented with a fait accompli, Renwick's directors, who last October agreed a 65p-a-share bid from AAH, the industrial holding company, have recommended the Kangra offer, and accepted in respect of their own shares although Renwick directors recently sold about half their shares in the market at around 73p.

Mr Kenneth Holmes, Renwick chief executive, said the board had no difficulty in recommending the offer which was a good one for shareholders. He said Mr Beck intended "to support and encourage the

development of the business. He is a man who is capable of giving us considerable support internationally".

Mr Holmes said he believed that Uto Bank had bought shares on hopes that Mr John Bentley's Tebbitt Group, which once had nearly 10 per cent of Renwick, would outbid AAH. In the event, Mr Bentley is thought to have sold his shares on to Kangra.

AAH, whose bid was foiled, still retains over 10 per cent of the Renwick voting capital as well as important business links with Renwick through the jointly-owned Western Fuel. Mr William Fybus, chairman, said no decision had been taken on the Kangra offer nor had there been any contact with Mr Beck. Kangra is making offers on a straight conversion basis.

Hanson Trust yesterday extended its £13m bid for Central Manufacturing & Trading following informal indications from the takeover panel that rival bidder Caparo Investments should lay its terms on the table. However, neither Caparo nor its advisers, nor Robert Fleming, merchant bankers to CMT, was personally informed by the panel but received the news from a statement from Hanson Trust. A spokesman said they were "surprised".

The statement from Hanson said that the panel had requested Caparo to inform CMT shareholders by February 3 whether or not it intended to make an offer for the outstanding shares in CMT. "In these circumstances Hanson feels it is only right to extend its offer only 3 pm on Friday, February 13", it stated.

However, Mr Peter Fraser, said last night that there had been some misunderstanding by Hanson and its bankers, N. M. Rothschild. He said they had "only informally been told that we would not be able to let this matter drift on forever". The date, he said, for the fifth day of the bid, February 13, had been drawn from the air and not been a precise instruction. "Inevitably, there must come a time when something must be said and

they assumed we had made a precise instruction. Caparo know that we cannot let this go on forever".

Hanson received only 240,000 acceptances for its 49p cash per share offer for CMT's shares by its second closing date on Monday.

Hanson, held 13.3 per cent of CMT, when it made its first offer last November. This was shortly followed by a formal rejection document sent to shareholders by the CMT board, which described the bid as grossly undervaluing the company. Mr Roger Lewis, acting chairman, considered it "an opportunistic attempt to acquire CMT at a low point in the economic cycle". The board has consistently upheld this view and Hanson has responded with an attack on the group's assumptions of a return to profitability.

On December 3 CMT announced that an approach had been received from Caparo which might lead to an offer. Since then Caparo, the privately controlled investment group whose chairman is Mr Swire Paul, has steadily been increasing its stake to 21.5 per cent.

Mr Paul, who also described the Hanson offer as "mean", has indicated that terms of an agreed bid could be drawn up, once it receives the additional trading figures.

With poor demand since the summer, Benjamin Priest has concentrated on tightening its manufacturing base in readiness for any upturn. Interim trading profits fell by 60 per cent to £633,000 and interest charges totalled £593,000, up 57 per cent. Turnover was static at £22m.

Property disposals outside the group's Midlands operations are underway and there is scope for further sales if necessary. Mr Wardle is taking a cautious view of the future but expects the group's widespread of small-scale operations to recover rapidly when the automotive and civil engineering industries it serves start to recover.

Exxon Corporation income clipped in last quarter

Exxon Corporation's fourth quarter net income was 1.1 per cent down at \$1,350m (\$1,362m) or \$3.12 a share on total revenue of \$28,847m.

In the 1979 fourth quarter, net income was \$1,356m or \$3.10 a share.

The decline in net income was attributed to lower operating earnings which were partially offset by increased gains on foreign exchange translations. For the whole of 1980 net income was \$5,660m against \$4,290m on revenues of \$110,470m against \$84,970m.

Video boom aids TDK

TDK Electronics Co. Japan's top manufacturer of ferrites and magnetic tapes, has reported record consolidated earnings for the year to November 30, after a brisk increase in sales of all products and a jump in exports.

TDK officials said that net profits were 21,273m yen (\$43.68m), a 35 per cent jump from 15,666m yen a year before. Sales rose to 214,773m yen, up 36.9 per cent from 156,892m yen in the preceding year.

Earnings per common share rose to 208.39 yen from 156.01 yen.

The record earnings came against the backdrop of an upsurge in demand for video tape recorders. TDK officials noted that VTR production in the Japanese electronics industry doubled in 1980 and, with it, their company's VTR-related products showed a sharp sales increase.

## Bahco hopes to agree higher bid for Record

By Catherine Gunn

Fresh talks between Sheffield tool manufacturer Record Ridgway and bidder Bahco could lead to a higher, agreed cash offer for Record today.

Record Ridgway's board announced that the talks were taking place yesterday, and shareholders are to take action on the existing extended offer from Bahco of 37p a share, pending an announcement it hopes to make today.

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Last night Mr James Powell of Guinness Mahon, Bahco's adviser, said: "We are in discussion in an effort to find a basis on which the board of Record and their advisers could recommend a bid by us. It is hoped that we will be able to make an agreed cash offer." Bahco is the British subsidiary of Swedish tool and components manufacturers A. B. Bahco.

Record Ridgway's shares jumped 4p to 43p yesterday on the news of the renewed talks, which were resumed late last week. Earlier this month they stood at a high of 46p after an unnamed rival bidder unexpectedly entered into discussions with Record. But that bidder was forced to withdraw suddenly, upsetting the shares which on Monday this week were standing at the original Bahco offer price of 37p.

That offer valued Record at £4.13m and was resisted by the board as inadequate. Bahco broke down in December after nine months when the two groups could not agree on the proposed price. Bahco went ahead with its offer, but acceptances totalled only 19.3 per cent.

The first offer was extended until the end of this month with the proviso that further extensions could only last until February 22.

Record Ridgway made a £262,000 pretax loss in the year to September 28, 1980.

Bank Base Rates

ABN Bank ..... 14%  
Barclays ..... 14%  
BCCI ..... 14%  
Consolidated Credits ..... 14%  
C. Hoare & Co ..... 14%  
Midland Bank ..... 14%  
Nat Westminister ..... 14%  
RBS ..... 14%  
TSB ..... 14%  
Williams and Glyn's ..... 14%

\* 7 day deposit, on terms of £10,000 deposit, 12% over £50,000 12 1/2%.

## Eurotherm down 17pc for year

After a 13 per cent drop in half-time taxable tax profits, Eurotherm International, the control gear group based at Worthing, went on to suffer a 17 per cent fall to £2.4m over the full year to October 31. Sales, by contrast, rose 14.3 per cent to £24.8m, almost as fast as in the first six months. The ordinary dividend stays at 4.5p net or 6.44p gross with a final payment of 3p a share.

The group suffered from rapidly rising costs, high interest rates and the sluggishness of sterling. The group sells products like industrial temperature control equipment which goes to industries suffering



Dr Jack Leonard, incoming chairman of Eurotherm.

most from the world recession. Despite this, ten of the 13 trading companies in the group, had a good year over eight more made money.

The fall in profits reflected technical problems not overcome until late in the year, while the strong pound forced the United States company in widening its margins by manufacturing more over there.

Several new lines are now ready for sale; the expenditure on them fell into 1979.

This past year borrowings fell £600,000 to £3.3m. Total business is at present holding up well, but the group cannot see very far ahead. There is, however, no cause for pessimism, the board reports. At the pending annual meeting, Mr Jim Hartnett steps down as chairman in favour of Dr Jack Leonard.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Monthly figures for unemployment in the UK, published by the Department of Employment yesterday.

	Adults (thousands)	% of all employees	Unadj. inc.
1980			
Jan.	1,327	8.5	1,470
Feb.	1,322	8.5	1,468
Mar.	1,413	8.9	1,477
Apr.	1,458	9.0	1,522
May	1,484	9.1	1,569
June	1,536	9.4	1,638
July	1,600	9.6	1,698
Aug.	1,652	9.7	1,758
Sept.	1,724	9.8	1,838
Oct.	1,800	9.9	1,918
Nov.	1,878	10.0	1,998
Dec.	1,952	10.1	2,078
1981			
Jan.	2,038	10.2	2,168

REGIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT

Seasonally adjusted (including school leavers)

	Number	Change in number	% of employees
South East	413.3	+0.3	8.8
East Anglia	54.1	+0.8	7.5
West Midlands	124.6	+4.3	8.3
E. Midlands	124.8	+4.0	8.4
Yorkshire & Humberside	208.7	+10.9	9.8
N. West	320.1	+13.9	9.9
North	171.9	+7.2	11.2
Wales	133.3	+4.9	12.3
Scotland	222.3	+2.0	12.4
Britain	2,145.0	+99.7	9.1
N. Ireland	60.9	+2.3	16.8
United Kingdom	2,205.9	+102.6	9.3

## Town &amp; City interim loss higher

Town and City Properties' pretax loss was slightly higher, at £7.5m, in the half-year to September 28, 1980, compared with a loss of £5.7m last time. Net income, from property rose from £3.16m to £4.27m and, income from other sources from £3.36m to £3.55m, making a total of £7.82m, against £6.52m. However, interest payable grew from £14.1m to £15.57m.

Since last July, a further £1m of property has been sold with a book value of £14m. This brings the total of sales since March last year to £21m, with a book value of £15m. As last year, there is no interim dividend.

Dundonian to buy Planned Savings

Surrey-based Dundonian Ltd, which is in property development, natural resources and public services, is to buy Planned Savings (Holdings). This company provides management services, including life

assurance, administrative pensions and investment management, to companies, trusts, pension funds, friendly societies and private clients. The price is £250,000 cash and 812,500 ordinary shares in Dundonian, to be issued at 80p each.

Planned Savings' pretax profits for 1980 were about £105,000. The takeover will considerably enhance Dundonian's finance and insurance interests and will create a stronger financial services division—with funds under management of more than £25m—in balance with other group activities.

Record profit again from Glass, Glover

Record results are once again reported by the Glass, Glover Group, the food distributor and importer of fresh fruit and vegetables. In the 12 months to September 30, 1980, pretax profits rose by 23.5 per cent to a record £659,000, rump turn-

over expanded from £304.3m to £37.63m.

Turnover and profits have risen to fresh records each year since 1976 and have doubled in that period. The total gross dividend is being raised from 2.64p to 3p.

Zettlers up a fifth at half-time

Zettlers, the pools and bingo group, reports a 19.8 per cent rise in pretax profits to £737,000 for the half-year to September 30. This was achieved on turnover 15.4 per cent higher at £5.88m, after deducting payments to pools winners and betting tax totalling £16.12m, against £5.39m last time. The interim payment is being lifted from 1.07p gross to 1.21p.

Zettlers' board, headed by Mr Paul Zetter, reports that almost the whole of the profits increase is attributed to the pools division.

## KCA consolidates US interests with £3m deal

By Margaret Pagano

KCA International yesterday expanded its United States oil programme with its acquisition of a 51 per cent interest in the activities under the roof of the development company Baron Industries.

KCA paid \$1m for the 51 per cent stake in Baron and has provided a further \$7m (a total of £3.33m) of working capital in partnership with the Royal Bank of Canada (London). KCA has the option to acquire full ownership of the company.

The deal ties together the group's United States interests, said Mr Paul Bristol, KCA's chairman, who has previously indicated that he wants to see KCA on at least an equal foot-

ing with the giants of the United States oil and gas finance houses.

By purchasing Baron, KCA is consolidating its United States activities under one roof. The group's two drilling wells, which are on contract in North Dakota and Montana, are worth about \$12m and will be transferred for use at Baron's reserves. Estimates that its reserves will yield over eight years, some \$118m in gross revenue.

KCA's shares gained 13p to 176p on the news. Forecasts for the year to December, 1980, are for £3.5m to £4m of pretax profits.

## Rights issue for SPO Minerals

SPO Minerals, the mining company, launched last year, plans to raise £482,000 from a one-for-four rights issue and use the proceeds to buy Doe Lea Colliery in Derbyshire. The 10p shares are to be offered at 10p each.

At the same time, SPO announced that it has sold for £187,500 its 5 per cent stake in Carnon Consolidated Tin Mines, which owns the Wheal Jane mine in Cornwall. The stake was sold to Rio Tinto Zinc, which now controls all of the equity.

SPO will be paying £373,000 for Doe Lea, which is one of the larger private coal producers in Britain licensed by the National Coal Board.

## Business appointments

## Development director for Tarmac

Mr Bob Taylor has become business development director of Tarmac Industrial Holdings.

Mr D. V. Newbold has been elected chairman of the board of directors of Foster Wheeler Limited, Foster Wheeler's new holding company. Mr T. M. Evans becomes secretary. Mr A. J. Clayton, Mr K. A. De Ghetto, Mr D. R. Gray, Mr J. T. Kelley and Mr F. A. Lee are directors. All but Mr Clayton are on the board of Foster Wheeler. Every of which Mr Newbold is the chairman. Other directors are Mr J. A. Bunn, Mr E. D. Hibbert, Mr I. G. Lucas, Mr A. J. McKerracher, Mr J. Ramsden, Mr R. D. Wass and Mr J. E. Williams.

Mr John C. A. Irish will become managing director of Spar (UK) on May 1.

Mr Michael Andrews has joined Wilsons Manchester Brewery as marketing director.

Mr Harry Shepherd has been appointed the first director of the Oxford Street Association.

Dr B. F. Williams has become a director of Guinness Extra Stout.

Mr Stuart J. Hickey has been made an additional director of Telford.

Mr C. B. Binding joined the board of W. & J. Gosport.

Mr F. J. Briggs has become a director of Williams and James (Engineers).

Mr G. M. Simmonds and Mr R. L. Owen are appointed to the board of Broomfield & Co.

Mr Eric Spearling and Mr John Harding have joined the main board of James Clark & Eaton.

Mr E. Tozer is now a director of Guinness Mahon & Co.

Mr C. K. R. Nunnally has been appointed chairman of the United States and General Trust Corporation in place of Mr W. R. Morton who has retired from the board.

Mr M. C. Stoddart, the deputy chairman of Electra Investment Trust will also become chief executive on February 1 and Mr E. P. A. Watson will join the board.

Mr Michael E. Kelsey has been appointed chairman of chief executive of Crouse-Hinds (UK).

Mr John Baring has become a non-executive director of Dunlop.

Mr A. T. Harvey is now an executive director and Mr Jeremy F. Lever has resigned from the board.

Mr G. A. Keith Wilkinson has become director of Ferranti Measurements.

Mr Wallace P. Dunlop has been appointed managing director of Morgan Berkeley and Company, succeeding Mr Barry Cullum who becomes managing director of Benmar Marketing and Supply.

Mr Peter Ross has joined the board of DCI (Scotland).

Mr Michael F. Cook has been appointed financial director of Hanger Investments. He remains company secretary.

Mr Roger Childs has joined the board of Expanded Metal Co as group managing director in succession to Mr R. D. Scott who has retired.

Mr John Hudd, manager of National Provincial Glass Company, has been made a director.

Mr Robin MacKichan has joined Aquascutum and becomes director and chief executive of Aquascutum International.

Mr David Wood has been appointed national manager for the hire and sales division of Stephens & Carter.

Mr William Keyser, Mr M. B. Berry, and Mr David Mabbs have joined the board of ODI.

Mr Bob Lloyd-Jones will become director general of the Retail Consortium on May 1.

Mr Peter Vickers has become group executive—Middle East of the Ewbank Consulting Group, based in Abu Dhabi.

Mr David Whitford has been re-elected chairman of the Wine Development Board for 1981. Mr Michael Dawson, of Cockburn & Co. (Leith) and Mr Philip Wetz, of Unwins have also joined the board.

Mr Keith S. Sales has been made vice president, character, merchandise licensing, publications, music publishing and records of Walt Disney Productions (UK).

The Chloride Group's automotive and industrial battery operations in Europe are to be combined from March 2 under the chairmanship of Mr Ken Hodgson, a main board director and chairman of overseas operations. Mr Hodgson will finish his secondment from Chloride Batteries Australia to Chloride Group as chairman of automotive operations in Europe, and resign as a director of Chloride Group.

Mr Michael Sharran, the chairman of industrial operations in Europe and a main board director, becomes director of finance and central services. Mr David Cochran, executive vice-chairman and finance director, who plans to retire in May 1982, will work directly with the chief executive.

Mr G. E. Hardwick has been appointed director of marketing for Dunlop's United Kingdom tyre group. He is succeeded as director and general manager, replacement by Mr G. D. Redford.

Mr Graham S. Clarke has been appointed group financial director of Fairley Holdings.

Mr W. Leonard Hyde has been elected president of the Leeds Festival Building Society. He succeeds Mr J. Malcolm Barr.

## Marine underwriters see another bleak year ahead

By Richard Allen Insurance Correspondent

Rocked by three years of heavy losses, marine underwriters in the London insurance market still see little hope of recovery in the near future.

Speaking at the annual meeting of the Institute of London Underwriters yesterday, Mr Geoffrey Merriman, the chairman, claimed that some underwriters are now making losses even after taking into account investment income earned on premiums. "It is a bleak outlook for 1981", he said.

The ILU, which represents the company side of the marine insurance market in London, recently reported a significant decline in overall merchant

shipping tonnage lost from 2.3m tons gross in 1979 to 1.8m tons last year.

But the institute claims that despite the decline, underwriters probably will end up paying out more in claims, mainly as a result of inflation, while the cumulative effects of "three years' disastrous casualty experience" have yet to be quantified.

The cost to the London market of last year's losses has been unofficially estimated at around £500m, split almost equally between the company market and Lloyd's.

Mr Merriman said that the market was still dogged by over-capacity resulting from new competition keeping rates at an unenviable level.

## M. J. H. Nightingale &amp; Co. Limited



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كُنَّا فِي الْأَمَّا



World recession and the ravages of inflation appear to do little to dampen the international property market. Houses which attract the attention of the very rich will not draw large crowds of potential buyers, but there are enough well heeled clients visiting Britain's estate agencies for deals to be clinched. Knight Frank & Rukey, the London agents in conjunction with John German Ralph Pay, are convinced they will not have to wait long before a buyer is found for what must be one of

At basement level the house has its own private swimming pool, a jacuzzi, sauna, steam bath and impulse shower. There is also an area fitted out as a gymnasium which can also be used

by James Burton, the creator and builder of Regency St Leonards, the Clock House at Maze Hills, St Leonards on Sea, Sussex, was used as his own home. It is a

Strutt & Parker are the agents and invite offers above £195,000.

## Baron Phillips



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\*\*Cobham 2, 3, 4 & 5 bed £64-125,000

Cophorne 3 & 4 bed £40-49,000

Datchet 3 & 4 bed £94-50,000

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Ewell 1 bed £24,000

\*Hampton 2, 3 & 4 bed £33-54,000

Newquay 2 & 3 bed £20-25,000



Orpington 2 & 3 bed £35-56,000.

\*\*Reigate 4 bed £73,000

\*Sipson 3 bed £37-40,000

S. Woodford 1 bed £25-26,000

\*\*Weybridge 2, 3 & 4 bed £34-59,000

Winchester 3 & 4 bed £27-38,000

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**see also page 24**





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### PA/Senior Secretary

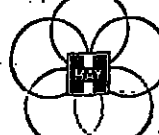
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**The Times Crossword Puzzle No 15435**

ACROSS

1 Poor potter in this game (9).

2 Serious and spiritless, no doubt (5).

3 Social worker gives Mr Lea no break (7).

4 Such arts the warrior or the poet shows (7).

5 No sort of profit from music (5).

6 After-service "organiza- tion" (9).

7 African leaders voluble, and so wealthy (8).

8 Great deal of moony for plant (4).

9 Struts twin (4).

10 Outraged to be from the castle (8).

11 Attendant set about firing one in Framley (9).

12 Key to a tragedy, that's plain (5).

13 Preserved - canned, com- monly (7).

14 Possibly best art silk (7).

15 Sounds enough for the French rest (5).

16 Plant appears odd-longer variety (9).

DOWN

1 Head-comer? What a good idea! (9).

2 The spirit of my translation (5).

3 Saint gives up clothes to an army man (4).

4 Possibly right about number getting in - doing well (8).

5 Agile doctor in river (6).

6 Bound to move hands on watch? (6).

7 Office in US naval prison gets a rough ride (9).

8 Banter in court exchanges (5).

9 No runners-up in these events? (4, 5).

10 Borne, or carried without real difficulty (9).

11 Like the Aged's feelings for Wemmick? (8).

12 Aim to correct message in friendly spirit (6).

13 One shot, or more? (6).

14 Report about the same ferocious animal (6).

15 She passes in poetry (5).

16 Mistake arising in bar or restaurant? (5).

Solution of Puzzle No 15434

ACROSS

1. MURDER

2. BUREAU

3. MURDER

4. MURDER

5. MURDER

6. MURDER

7. MURDER

8. MURDER

9. MURDER

10. MURDER

11. MURDER

12. MURDER

13. MURDER

14. MURDER

15. MURDER

16. MURDER

DOWN

1. MURDER

2. MURDER

3. MURDER

4. MURDER

5. MURDER

6. MURDER

7. MURDER

8. MURDER

9. MURDER

10. MURDER

11. MURDER

12. MURDER

13. MURDER

14. MURDER

15. MURDER

16. MURDER

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